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NORDIC JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

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Calls for Papers

We announce a special issue of the journal:

Nordic Journal of English Studies, volume 3, no. 1

Theme: The Influence of English on the Languages in the Nordic Countries

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Deadline for contributions: October 2003

We welcome contributions in all areas of linguistics such as grammar, lexis, phonology and pragmatics.

Expressions of interest from prospective contributors could be sent to the editors.

Ninth Nordic Conference for English Studies
University of Aarhus, Denmark
Thursday May 27 to Saturday May 29, 2004

Preliminary invitation and first call for papers

The Ninth Nordic Conference for English Studies will be hosted by the English Department of the University of Aarhus, Denmark in May 2004. Details of the conference will be posted as they become available on the conference web site at www.hum.au.dk/engelsk/naes2004.

Scholars in all areas of English Studies are invited to submit proposals for papers or posters to be presented at the conference. Papers will be presented at concurrent, thematically-organised parallel sessions and at workshops on specific topics, and the normal time allocation will be 30 minutes per presenter including time for questions and discussion. Workshop topics already proposed include: The syntax of English and the Nordic languages, Postcolonial studies, 'Intradisciplinarity' – crossing disciplinary boundaries within English Studies, The Medieval British Isles – Centre and Periphery,

Recent issues in Shakespeare studies, Issues in English language teaching, Exile, *Studium generale* at universities, and The politics of language. There will be many more, and the conference will be organised around the papers submitted. For those who prefer to give a visual rather than oral presentation, there is the option of preparing a display in poster form. Posters will be displayed throughout the conference, and a special time will be set aside for conference participants to talk to poster presenters.

There will also be plenary sessions with invited speakers on issues of general interest within English Studies.

Proposals for papers or posters should be sent in electronic form, giving a title and an abstract of 75-100 words in length, to Tim Caudery, e-mail address engtc@hum.au.dk.

The organisers would also be pleased to receive proposals for workshop themes from anyone who would like to chair a workshop session and encourage others to present papers there. Again, please contact Tim Caudery.

The deadline for firm proposals for papers and poster presentations is November 1st, 2003, but the organisers would be happy to receive preliminary suggestions before that date.

In addition to the academic programme, there will be a full social programme at the conference and opportunities to see something of Aarhus and its surroundings. Aarhus is Denmark's second-largest city (population approx. 290,000) and the unofficial capital of Jutland; it is renowned for its beautiful architecture, its broad streets and light traffic (mainly bicycles), its shops, its youthful and easygoing atmosphere, and its multi-faceted nightlife.

Aarhus is well served by rail communications, and there are direct flights from Aarhus airport to Copenhagen, Stockholm and Oslo, as well as to London. There are also bus connections to Billund Airport, which offers a greater range of scheduled flight destinations.

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Complexity:
An interdisciplinary seminar on the moment of complexity
in textual and cultural studies
(Aalborg University, 23rd - 24th January 2004)

The purpose of the seminar is to gather voices that have attempted to theorize and analyse moments of complexity, both within their separate fields and across disciplinary boundaries. These voices are invited to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue in a number of workshop sessions following keynote addresses from invited main speakers.

Plenary sessions/key note addresses proposed:

Mark C. Taylor (Williams College), "The moment of complexity and emergence"

Charles Lock (University of Copenhagen), "Complexity in textual theory"

Workshops will offer participating researchers a chance to present and discuss detailed approaches to the seminar's main themes.

Registration and further details: www.sprog.auc.dk/complexity

English Literature and a Single European Currency

CHARLES LOCK

"and that will make a hole in a sovereign"[1]

NOTE: A version of this paper was first presented as the Inaugural Lecture of the Professor of English Literature at the University of Copenhagen, on 13 February 1996. At that time, Denmark and Britain had already negotiated a means of 'opting out' of the single European currency. Subsequently, in a referendum held on 28 September 2000, Denmark firmly rejected the euro. The topic of debate and unease has been the principle of sovereignty. Against European integration, the 'ever closer union', we still, in these northern lands, hear voiced the rhetoric of national sovereignty. And it may not be coincidental that the attachment to the national currency is strongest in countries where the coinage bears the image of the sovereign. Of all the Nordic nations, only the republic of Finland has exchanged its mark for the euro, without resistance or complaint. The three Nordic nations whose currency is the crown - Denmark, Norway, Sweden – remain, albeit on disparate trajectories, outside the European Monetary Union, as does sterling.

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Sovereignty has much to do with sovereigns, with transcendental centres of authority, whose representation on the coinage gives a mystique, an aura, to our daily dealings; sovereignty guarantees, validates, underwrites the rituals of value and exchange. It thereby affirms and stabilizes value; all values in society are referred to that which is sovereign in it, that which is transcendent to the domain of exchange. That which subordinates and orders individuals, and shapes them into a society, is, we suppose, sovereign, and there is nothing that orders us more thoroughly than money. It has not been a choice presented even to the most individualistic, what sort of currency he or she may use. It is no more our choice to select our currency than it is to choose our

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[1] , said Farfrae, in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, ch. XLV (1886); this particular phrase was added in the 1887 edition.

language. For language is also currency. Neither the language nor the currency can be tendered for privatization.

Yet, in the context of debates over sovereignty, the sense of the link between currency and language is not so much of their shared fluidity, liquidity, circulation, as of their shared monumentality. The Queen's English, the coin of the realm: these are the phrasal figures of sovereignty. Between the face value and the substance value of a coin is the relationship between monumentality and circulation. Words have their exchangeable value, of current usage, and their diachronic monumentality as exemplified in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. And their exchangeable value, as was first shown by Saussure and Jakobson, has nothing to do with essential or etymological meaning but only with phonetic differentiation: big is not pig is not fig: we may trace each of those words back to an earlier state, but what gives them their exchange value today is simply their phonemic difference from each other and from all other words.

Sovereigns as coins are tokens of exchange, of value for something else; yet the sovereign as image and superscription is a type of monumentality, unmoving, eternal, of inherent value, unexchangeable. There is value for exchange and there is absolute value. This contradiction is inherent in the structure of a coin - circular for circulation; but solid, *solidus*.[2] What is figured within the circle does not need a circular frame: the sovereign is more usually represented in a rectangular frame, and the rectangular is the geometry of the monumental. Pure circularity would be represented by a wheel, a hollow circle, an in-solidus, such as the 1, 2, and 5 crown coins in Denmark.[3] The head of the crowned sovereign remains on the 10 and 20 crown coins, but has been replaced on the silver coins by three crowns and three Ms each with a subscript II

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[2] 'solidus' is the 's' of the old notation of £.s.d. (libra, solidus, denarius), known 'in translation' as pounds, shillings and pence.

[3] With an increasing disparity between the values of the Danish and Swedish crowns in the 1980s, it was necessary to make a clear distinction in the look and feel of the coinage. Necessary, that is, for the Danes, whose more valuable crown would suffer from confusion with the less valuable Swedish crown. So in 1992, to prevent mistakes, whether optically or haptically induced, the Danes put holes in their own crowns.

(for Queen Margrethe II), arranged alternately in a circle around the empty centre. The six elements of the circular pattern on the 'heads' side, the obverse, match the six elements of the Viking design on the reverse. (Interestingly, on the old unholed and 'solid' one crown coin, the Queen's head is without a crown, as if one crown were adequate, as ground, and that a figured crown would be redundant.) A Roman might wonder at one crown, two crowns and five crowns all being represented by three crowns; and he might ask how many sovereigns are taken to be represented by three initial Ms? The conflict between monumentality and circularity is akin to that known somewhat misleadingly as squaring the circle: anyone can contain a circle within a square, or a square within a circle. The real problem is to square the ring: the two cannot be reconciled. One cannot fit a crowned head, a sovereign, into or onto the rim of a wheel; instead one must resort to a repetitive design, of rotational symmetry. The current Danish coins are thus in their design similar to the EU flag, with, on a blue ground, its circle of stars (of indeterminate number, like those of the stars but not of the stripes on another flag).

These similarities may not be accidental. In traditional theories of semiotics we are accustomed to thinking in terms of the difference between figure and ground: figure is essential, valuable, significant - ground is none of those. Whether a text be written on paper, parchment or computer screen should make no difference at all to the meaning of that text, and value is all in the meaning. Since the invention of printing, when cheap costs of material and reproduction rendered the ground disposable, and printed paper money shocked by its felt lack of substance, only the coinage has preserved for us the sense that figure and ground may be intrinsically inseparable: Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, in an essay of the 1770s, 'On the Epigram,' argues that a coin is that in which the inscription and the inscribed are one. (Cited in Shell, 1982: 156; see Lock 1998) The metal ground is the 'anticipation' and the inscription is the 'resolution.' We may see in this theory of the epigram an anticipation of that which finds *its* resolution in Saussure's theory of the two-part sign, with its definitive

reconfiguring of the intelligible as a duplication of the sensible - in a linguistic sign, normatively, the visual and the phonetic.

Lessing's point is that there can be *no* substance value, or purely material value, in a coin. As long as there is sovereignty, it will be a criminal offence to melt down or de-face a coin of the realm. Nor can there be purely notional, conceptual, intelligible value in a coin. The inscription cannot be detached from its ground; nor, when the ground is pure silver or even gold, is it possible - constitutionally - to detach the ground from the figure, to erase the inscription.

Here is our paradox: one coin of one value is exactly like another, as good as any other, yet each coin is entirely coincidental with itself. Monumentality and circulation, essence and surface, meet in endless combat, in an inseparability that depends only on the idea of sovereignty.

A coin is good to hold (*drachma* means 'a handful of coins'), yet coins are not held and kept, unless by numismatists. A coin loses its function when it is collected; it is that which is always to be expended. It is so commonly - we might say, teleologically - expended that in England the most acceptable euphemism for urination is to spend a penny. What else might one spend? It is the most proper item of expenditure, even as nothing that is to be spent can have its propriety retained. What is expended is wasted, dross, spent. (We need not pursue the Freudian link between gold and faeces - except, parenthetically, to draw attention to that odd lexical pair: increment/ excrement.)

What is our sovereign's image doing on that which we appear to value so little, on coins on which we occupy our thoughts only in the determination of the manner in which we shall be rid of them? The sovereign circulates among her subjects. However much she is passed about, she remains within the orbit of her dominion. The territory of circulation is coterminous with that of her nation. Where I do not rule, the image declares, there I am worthless, the coin affirms.

The limits even of the 'universality' of the Roman empire are made clear by Christ's words about the tribute-money: 'And they

brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and this superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.' (Matt. 22:21; Mk. 12:13; Lk. 20:20) This has been interpreted by some to mean that the intelligible aspect of the coin, the inscription bearing his name and image, belongs to Caesar, while the materiality, the mineral creation, belongs to God. The figure would thus be earthly, but the ground is of transcendent origin. (Shell, 161, note) We may however suppose Jesus to be not less intelligent than Lessing: the Last Supper enacts and initiates the doctrine of the sign as sacrament, embodying the inalienable inseparable contract between figure and ground, sign and matter. There is no separating figure from ground, because there can be no figure without ground.

The first Christian Emperor, Constantine, was concerned that only his own image should be on the coinage, with the cross on the verso. In late 7th century Byzantium, however, during the reign of Justinian II, we find Christ depicted on the coinage, with the visual pun of the identifying halo coinciding with the rim of the coin, while the Emperor Justinian is depicted on what we must assume has now become the *verso*. Above the image of Christ the superscription reads 'Rex regnantium' - King of the Kingdom - while on the verso the superscription reads: 'Dominus Justinianus Servus Christi' - 'Lord Justinian, servant of Christ'. (Belting 1994: 135-38) This is problematic, because the image of Christ asserts a cosmic sovereignty - a truly universal empire, unlike the Roman - and therefore the universal validity of its coinage.

It is notable that such a rash practice should have begun precisely when the Eastern Roman Empire was feeling most acutely its limitations, against the new empire of Islam; and at about the time of the first Islamic edict against images in Christian churches within its territory, issued in 721. Yet we should not be entirely surprised, for sovereignty needs limits, and is content within them. When a coin reaches the border of the territory over which its graven image holds sovereignty, it must be exchanged not for a thing of inherent value - something else - but for something similar,

another coin, bearing another image, or, in Islam, an aniconic sign. The coin of the realm, by virtue of being valueless outside the realm, defines the pragmatic limits of the realm. Every exchange at the border, every negotiation of rates, is thus not a reduction but an affirmation of sovereignty.

The euro is posited on the assumption that future empires will be measured and determined by currencies, without - and this is the source of popular discontent - either the centralizing power or the restraining influence of sovereignty. If sovereignty is 'transferred to Brussels', as is so often threatened, then truly the new Europe will have been a failure: for its aim, the minimal condition for its success, must be a semiotic substitution for what is recognized (to adapt the role of metanarrative in Lyotard's *Postmodern Condition*) as an absence, in all but signs, of sovereignty. The best-known and most easily-comprehended of those signs today is the constitutional fiction of the constitutional monarch.

The head of the sovereign, the crowned head, known synecdochically as the crown, is on the crowned coin, itself known in some nations as the crown. Before the invention of photography and television, it was above all the coinage that provided the image of the monarch. It is still, for us, on coins and (in Britain) on stamps, that we are most familiar with the image of the sovereign in our quotidian doings. Until the intrusive publicity of modern technology made invisibility unimaginable, the coin was the popular and almost the only image of the sovereign. This is marvellously caught in George Lamming's novel of a West Indian growing up in the 1930s, *In the Castle of my Skin*. Queen Victoria's birthday, May 24th, Empire Day, was celebrated in Barbados, and on that day each child was given a penny at school:

> Most of the boys were busy examining the pennies.... The boys speculated whether it was possible to reproduce them.... Some argued quietly about the size of the king's face, and the way the face had been stamped on the copper. It was very clever, they thought. It was a real face, and the face they had

seen in other pictures. Some said it was really a photograph of the king stuck on to some kind of background and then coloured with copper. This face on the penny was very fascinating. Could you have a penny without a face? [Lessing's question of the epigram] .... How did the face get there? ... Some said it was a drawing of the king made with a pin while the copper was soft.... It was a long and patient undertaking. But it had to be done if there was going to be any money at all, and everyone knew how important money was. It was difficult but necessary. That was not feasible, some thought. In fact it was very silly to argue that such a job would be done by sensible people. And the English who were the only people in the world to deal with pennies were very sensible. You couldn't involve a king in all that nonsense of melting down copper and making a drawing. And how would he find the time to sit till all those million pennies were done? ... The face of the king was the same on every penny and in every detail.... Someone said it was the same penny all the time. One penny, that is the first penny ever made, was the real penny, and all the others were made by a kind of stamp. You simply had to get the first penny and the necessary materials and thousands followed. That meant, someone asked, that you couldn't spend the first penny. (Lamming 1987: 44-45)

This comes close to the mystery of sovereignty, for it identifies the unexpendable residue which guarantees the value of all that can be spent. The coinage must have a centre, a still unmoving point, transcendent to the order of circulation, a fixed source of value, an essence. But even this does not satisfy a colonial curiosity:

Someone wanted to know how that first penny was made.... That wasn't difficult, the boy explained. The penny was made as you saw it without the face of the king. It was heated by a special fire so that it would receive and keep the mark made on it. It was shaped and washed properly, and

finally sent to the king who pressed it on one side of his face. The picture came out as we saw it. That was why we saw one side only of the face. (Lamming: 45-46)

And then we get the most brilliant intervention in the debate:

But all the arguments for the stamp and the drawing were thrown overboard since one boy had it from good authority that the king was never seen.

Maybe as a baby and later as a boy. But when he became a king no one ever saw him. No one could see him. They had seen ... pictures of the king [in newsreels and photographs] taking the salute and inspecting the ranks ... That wasn't the king at all. It was the king's shadow. ... There was a shadow king who did whatever a king should do. It was the shadow king who went to parades, took the salute and did those things with which we associated the king. The shadow king was a part of the English tradition. The English, the boy said, were fond of shadows.... Somebody asked if you were ever talking to a real man or a shadow when you talked to an Englishman, and the boy said yes. (Lamming: 46-47)

Lamming's is a dazzling treatment of the various theories of representation; it appears to conclude, in agreement with the Emperor Constantine, that the source of value and sovereignty ought to be invisible, shadowed, shrouded in mystique, shimmering in an aura. (And where did we first see and not see a hologram, if not on a banknote or a credit card?)

If the value of coinage is to be derived from a wilful mystification of authority, an obsolete model of transcendence, reliant on what is now recognized as the fiction of sovereignty, what are we to do with language - the other side of this paper's coin?

It was once supposed that when we speak, our words and our language issued forth from our inmost being; just as language was supposed to be the defining attribute of man, so one's own language,

one's mother tongue, native speech, are taken, in these very metaphors, to be part of our organic constitution: my tongue is my tongue in English and in all the Romance languages (though not in the Germanic tongues). Language is of the essence, of our individual essence, our breath, our being. Such a view is articulated to the utmost tip of the tongue in Shakespeare's *Richard II*, when Mowbray is sentenced to banishment from England for life:

> The language I have learnt these forty years,
> My native English, now I must forego,
> And now my tongue's use is to me no more
> Than an unstringéd viol or a harp,
> Or like a cunning instrument cased up –
> Or being open, put into his hands
> That knows no touch to tune the harmony.
> Within my mouth you have engaoled my tongue,
> Doubly portcullised with my teeth and lips,
> And dull unfeeling barren ignorance
> Is made my gaoler to attend on me.
>
> > (*Richard II*, I iii 159-69)[4]

Mowbray's anticipation of exile is matched in the next act by the news given to King Richard of the death of John of Gaunt, just after Gaunt has made one of the most famous speeches in all of English literature - at any rate the most English, and so presumably famous for being most English - a speech which Richard, happily for his conscience, has arrived too late to hear:

> O, but they say the *tongues* of dying men
> Enforce attention like deep harmony:
> Where words are scarce they are seldom *spent* in vain,
> For they breathe truth that breathe their words in vain.
>
> > (*Richard II*, II, i, 5-8)

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[4] The line 'doubly portcullised with my teeth and lips' is a lingual tour de force - the speaking of the line enacting the double and sequent closure of dentals and labials - whose only rival in English may be the opening apostrophe of Nabokov's *Lolita*.

The tongue is likened, in its 'deep harmony,' to a musical instrument, yet what is spoken is *spent*, like money. Previously Gaunt had challenged his son Bolingbroke: 'to what purpose dost thou hoard thy words?' Bolingbroke replies that he has 'too few' words to take his leave of his father, though 'the tongue's office should be prodigal': for words, like coins, exist only to be spent. (*Richard II*, I, iii, 253-56) When some time later Richard asks about Gaunt: 'What says he?' Northumberland replies:

> Nay nothing, all is said;
> His *tongue* is now a stringless instrument;
> Words, life, and all, old Lancaster hath *spent*.
> (*Richard II*, II, i, 148-50)

To which Richard's surviving uncle, Edmund Duke of York, adds:

> Be York the next that must be bankrupt so!

York foresees that Gaunt's lands will be seized by Richard, and will not be inherited by his exiled son, Bolingbroke, the future Henry IV. Bankruptcy is thus at once a figure for death, exile, and silence. Gaunt's tongue, a stringless instrument, is like Mowbray's 'no more than an unstringéd viol or a harp': for one whose life is his language, exile is death.

The play of words on and with coins is in Shakespeare endemic (to resort to a non-financial substitute for the more obvious 'interesting'): when Richard has handed over his crown to Bolingbroke, has been stripped of his kingship and of all his titles, he wonders 'if my word be sterling yet in England' (*Richard II*, IV, i, 264): England is the land whose limits contain both the King's English and the coin of the realm.[5]

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[5] It is, in the present context, worth noting that, according to *Klein's Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1971) '*sterling* is not related to ME *sterre*, 'star' (as suggested by most lexicographers).' One lexicographer not in this matter to be faulted is H.C. Wyld, whose *Universal Dictionary of the English Language* (London: Routledge, 1932) makes no suggestion of stars, confesses that the origin of *sterling* is uncertain, but notes that it was 'in ME formerly supposed to be from Esterling, name given to traders of the Hanseatic League; in MHG *sterlinc* was the name of a coin.' To derive sterling from Österling is certainly tempting, on the littoral of Mare Balticum.

John of Gaunt's speech about the condition of England is so celebrated and familiar, much recited and institutionally transmitted, because it accords with a sovereign and monumental idea of nation and literature. But if we trace the coinage through both parts of *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, we see strange things happening: a cycle which can be presented as an allegory of the way in which, in modern theoretical thinking, the diachronic study of solid monuments, visible signs of invisible essences, has been usurped by the synchronic fascination of structures, systems, liquidity, currency. (One may be a master - this, a monumental metaphor - of one's own language; but one is fluent only in another tongue.)

The Battle of Shrewsbury, fought between Henry IV and the rebels led by Northumberland and his son Hotspur, is won by somewhat dishonest means: a number of the King's supporters are dressed up as the King. The rebel Douglas kills Sir Walter Blunt in the belief that Blunt is the King. The stage direction (*Henry IV, Part One*, V iii) keeps the reader informed, and is trite in its explanation: 'Then enter Douglas and Sir Walter Blunt (disguised as the king) fighting.' The theatre audience is of course as much in the dark as Douglas, for we identify characters on stage precisely by their costumes, especially when they are wearing helmets. Douglas tells Hotspur of his great triumph, but Hotspur recognizes the face of Blunt:

Hotspur:	This, Douglas? No, I know this face full well.
	A gallant knight he was, his name was Blunt,
	Semblably furnished like the king himself.....
	The king hath many marching in his coats.
Douglas:	Now, by my sword, I will kill all his coats,
	I'll murder all his wardrobe, piece by piece,
	Until I meet the King.

<div align="right">(Henry IV, Part One, V, iii, 19-28)</div>

In the next scene, on cue, Douglas does indeed encounter the King:

> Another king! They grow like Hydra's heads.
> I am *the* Douglas, fatal to all those

	That wear those colours on them. What art thou,
	That *counterfeit'st* the person of a king?
King:	The King himself, who, Douglas, grieves at heart
	So many of his *shadows* thou hast met,
	And not the very King....
Douglas:	I fear thou art another *counterfeit*.

<div align="right">

(Henry IV, Part One, V, iii, 35)

</div>

And with that fear we switch from the theatrical figure, the wardrobe and the coats, to the metaphorics of coinage, with, in 'counterfeit', the dishonesty registered by the verb 'to coin'. And Douglas misses the triumph of killing the real king, the true sovereign, not through the King's valour, but because of the arrival of Prince Hal.

Hal and Hotspur fight in single combat while Falstaff (who could hardly be disguised by any wardrobe) is attacked by Douglas and is seen to lie down on the stage. The stage direction reads: 'Douglas ... fighteth with Falstaff, who falls down as if he were dead.' The audience knows nothing of this for some thirty lines, while Hal kills Hotspur and sings his praises; Hal then sees Falstaff's body, speaks less fulsomely, and makes his exit, after which:

Falstaff (riseth up):

> ... 'Sblood, 'twas time to counterfeit, or that hot
> termagant Scot had *paid* me [put paid to me],
> scot and lot too. Counterfeit? I lie, I am no
> counterfeit. To die is to be a counterfeit, for he is
> but the counterfeit of a man, who hath not the
> life of a man: but to counterfeit dying, when a
> man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit but the
> true and perfect image of life itself. ...[Falstaff
> then sees Hotspur's corpse] How, if he should
> counterfeit too, and rise? By my faith, I am afraid
> that he would prove the better counterfeit.

<div align="right">

(Henry IV, Part One, V, iv, 110-124)

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What we see in this extraordinary, spectral battle is a transformation of figuration, from costume as identification to costume as deception, and from counterfeit as deception to counterfeit as coinage: true coining.

For what is Henry IV's army but a horde of coins, a conventional system whose elements are mistaken for autonomous persons, like the playing cards that Alice meets on the Queen's croquet ground?

Henry IV's trick of deception goes unpunished; the king suffers endless remorse for having usurped the throne from Richard II, but not for dishonourable practices in war. The Battle of Shrewsbury is a test of the currency of the king's image. The one who is punished is Falstaff, who did not pretend to be the king - clearly a dangerous and brave thing to do - but pretended not to be alive: for the better part of valour is discretion. When Hal, crowned Henry V, turns against Falstaff - 'for I have turned away my former self' - Falstaff can only say, 'Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds,' the sum borrowed from Shallow, which would have been represented, returned with interest, in the recognition of the sovereign. Instead, the sovereign treats Falstaff as a counterfeit - a false coin.

From the monumentally centralized and hierarchical world of John of Gaunt's ideal, we move through figures of coinage and currency to a world of multiplicity and instability, and in *Henry V* to a play whose very text is linguistically jumbled, macaronic.

In the unity of the kingdom that fights against the French at Harfleur and Agincourt, we hear linguistic representations of varieties of English, from the Welsh accent of Fluellen to the Scottish accent of Jamy and the unascribable - vaguely Irish - sounds of Macmorris (in the Folio their speeches are cued as 'Welsh,' 'Scottish,' 'Irish') whose accent accentuates his national problem:

> What ish my nation? Ish a villain, and a bastard, and a
> knave, and a rascal -- What ish my nation? Who talks of
> my nation? (*Henry V*, III ii 125)

In Fluellen we hear exemplified the principle of semantic value inhering purely in phonetic differentiation. We hear him recall to Henry how the King's great-uncle, the Black Prince, 'fought a most prave pattle here in France' (Henry V, IV vii 100); but his linguistic freedoms go beyond plosive modification to a disrespect for proper names and consecrated titles:

Fluellen:	What call you the town's name where Alexander the pig was born?
Gower:	Alexander the Great.
Fluellen:	Why, I pray you, is not pig great? The pig, or the great, or the mighty, or the huge ... or the magnanimous, are all one reckonings, save the phrase is a little variatious.

<div align="right">(Henry V, IV, vii, 15-19)[6]</div>

Problems of orthography and transcription are even more acute than elsewhere in Shakespeare, in these indications of irregular or non-standard pronunciation. But such dialogues are clear evidence of the recognition of varieties of spoken English, and of the possibility of the textual and theatrical representation of non-standard speech. And, in the same remarkable play, we find representation of non-native English in the language lesson given by Alice to the French princess Katharine:

Katharine:	Alice, tu as été en Angleterre, et tu bien parle le langue.
Alice:	Un peu, madame.
K:	Je te prie, m'enseignez... Comment appelez-vous la main en Anglais?
A:	La main? Elle est appelée de hand.
K:	De hand. Et les doigts?
A:	Les doigts? Ma foi, j'oublie les doigts; mais je me souviendrai. Les doigts? Je pense qu'ils sont appelés de fingres: oui, de fingres....
K:	Comment appelez-vous le col?
A:	De nick, madame.
K:	De nick. Et le menton?
A:	De chin.
K:	De sin. Le col, de nick. Le menton, de sin.

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[6] This is an instance of what Jean-Jacques Lecercle (Lecercle, 1990: 59) terms the 'remainder', that type of remainder that is visible when 'Great' as 'pig' or 'mighty' or 'huge' is seen slipping from proper to common noun.

| A: | Oui. Sauf votre honneur, en verité, vous prononcez les mots aussi droit que les natifs d'Angleterre. |
| | *(Henry V*, III, iv, 1-39) |

However, the lesson almost breaks down over an indelicate homophone, no less indelicate for being (robe/count) incorrect:

K:	Comment appelez vous le pied et la robe?
A:	Le foot, madame, et le count.
K:	Le foot, et le count? O Seigneur Dieu! Ils sont les mots de son mauvais [son mot/son mau], corruptible, gros, et impudique, et non pour les dames d'honneur d'user: je ne voudrais prononcer ces mots devant les seigneurs de France pour tout le monde. Foh! Le foot et le count. Néanmoins, je réciterai une autre fois ma leçon ensemble....
	(Henry V, III, iv, 49-58)

Here in this scene virtually unparalleled in English theatre, we see words as tokens of exchange: indeed we see the inadequacy of learning a foreign language as if each separate word had an equivalent unit of exchange. In Act IV scene iv we hear represented an encounter *between* languages, when Pistol arrests a French soldier, and 'Boy' interprets. Before the boy arrives, various terms uttered by the French soldier in his imprecations for mercy are understood by Pistol as English words of coinage, offers of a ransom, as in an echo poem:

Soldier:	... Ayey pitié de moi.
Pistol:	Moy shall not serve, I will have forty moys....
Soldier:	Est-il impossible d'échapper la force de ton bras?
Pistol:	Brass, cur? Thou damned and luxurious mountain goat, Offer'st me brass?
Soldier:	O pardonnez moi!
Pistol:	Say'st thou me so? Is that a ton of moys?

And then the boy intervenes to interpret, and further confusions follow. Pistol tells the boy to tell the soldier in French that he means to cut his throat.

Boy: ...ce soldat ici est disposé tout à cette heure de
                couper vôtre gorge.
Pistol: Owy, cuppele gorge, permafoy, Peasant, unless
                thou give me crowns, brave crowns;
                Or mangled shalt thou be by this my sword.
Soldier: O je vous supplie pour l'amour de Dieu, me
                pardonner! Je suis le gentilhomme de bonne
                maison: gardez ma vie, et je vous donnerai
                deux cent écus.
Pistol: What are his words?
Boy: He prays you to save his life, he is a gentleman
                of a good house, and for his ransom he will give
                you two hundred crowns.
Pistol: Tell him my fury shall abate, and I
                The crowns will take....
Boy: ... pour les écus que vous l'avez promis, il est
                content de vous donner la liberté.
                                              (*Henry V*, IV, iv, 35-54)

The episode epitomizes the problem: how does one translate a unit of currency, not at the rate of exchange of value, but at the lexical exchange? Boy translates 'deux cent écus' as 'two hundred crowns'. The rate of economic exchange is, we may say, fluid and common; by contrast, the negotiation of nominal exchange must confront the proper, and the monumental. One crown may be worth one ecu, financially - as it were semantically - but one proper noun cannot translate, or be exchanged with, another proper noun.

Act V, the climax of the entire cycle that began with Mowbray's exile and John of Gaunt's dying words, yet for many readers a perplexing anticlimax, brings together French and English in a textual and linguistic alliance, the marriage of Henry and Katharine; we might term this macaronic, and punningly invoke the Greek

makari, for the blessed non-union of two languages. May all differents be blessed, and all homogenizings be cursed.

We last saw and heard Katharine at her language lesson with Alice. Now Henry is asking for her hand in marriage, and she responds:

K:	Your majesty shall mock at me, I cannot speak your England.
H:	O fair Katharine! if you will love me *soundly* with your French heart, I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly with your English tongue. Do you like me, Kate?
K:	Pardonnez-moi, I cannot tell vat is 'like me.'
H:	An angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.
K: (to Alice)	Qui dit-il? que je suis semblable à un ange?
A:	Oui, vraiment, sauf votre grace, ainsi dit-il.
H:	I said so, dear Katharine, and I must not blush to affirm it.
K:	O bon Dieu! Les langues des hommes sont pleines de tromperies.
H: (to Alice)	What says she, fair one? That the tongues of men are full of deceits?
A:	Oui, dat de tongues of de mans is be full of deceits: dat is de princess.
K:	The princess is the better Englishwoman.... I am glad thou canst speak no better English; for if thou couldst, thou wouldst find me such a plain king that thou wouldst think that I had sold my farm to buy my crown.

<div align="right">(Henry V, V, ii, 102-126)</div>

In this 'farm' we must hear an echo of John of Gaunt:

> This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,
> Dear for her reputation throughout the world,
> Is now leased out - I die pronouncing it -
> Like to a tenement or pelting farm.

<div align="right">(Richard II, II, i, 56-60)</div>

And the word farm, cognate with firm, firma, signifies a fixed sum payable at regular intervals, and also that which is leased out at a fixed rent. Thus that which is firm, a parcel of land, terra firma, has been exchanged for that which is infirm and unstable, a crown, whose rate is not fixed, and which might be taken for an ecu, which in turn might become a euro.

Later on in the same scene of courtship, Henry decides that he will speak French to Katherine, upon which she compliments him:

K: Sauf votre honneur, le Français que vous parlez,
    il est meilleur que l'Anglais lequel je parle.

H: No, faith, is't not, Kate: but thy speaking of my
    tongue, and I thine, most truly-falsely, must
    needs be granted to be much at one.
         (*Henry V*, V, ii, 195-200)

Words and languages are now being exchanged and tested as coins.

H: How answer you, la plus belle Katharine du
    monde, mon très cher et devin déesse?

K: Your majesté 'ave fause French enough to deceive
    de most sage demoiselle dat is en France.

H: Now, fie upon my false French. By mine
    honour, in true English, I love thee, Kate....
    Come, your answer in broken music; for thy
    voice is music, and thy English broken: therefore,
    queen of all, Katharine, break thy mind to me in
    broken English; wilt thou have me?

K: Dat is as it shall please de roi mon père.
         (*Henry V*, V, ii, 226-261)

There then follows a parody of the traditional exchange of kisses, for this is an 'exchange' of the French and English words for 'kiss':

H.:   Upon that I kiss your hand, and I call you my
    queen.

K: Laissez, mon seigneur, laissez, laissez! Ma foi, je
    ne veux point que vous abaissiez [would lower

	yourself: a poet's pun and a princess's subjunctive] votre grandeur en baisant la main d'une de votre seigneurie indigne serviteur...
H:	Then I will kiss your lips, Kate.
K:	Les dames et demoiselles, pour être baisées devant leur noces, il n'est pas la coutume de France.
H:	Madam my interpreter, what says she?
Alice:	Dat it is not be de fashion pour les ladies of France – I cannot tell vat is baiser in Anglish.
H:	To kiss.
A:	Your majesty entendre bettre que moi.

<div align="right">(Henry V, V, ii, 265-80)</div>

The play ends with Henry as heir to the throne of France, demanding that the King of France, his father-in-law, address him in a polyglot fashion, the three languages - English, French, Latin - reminiscent of the three languages - Latin, Greek, Hebrew - in which Pilate had Jesus styled 'King of the Jews' (John 19: 19-20) - not to mention the superscriptions on the coinage.

Exeter: France	Where your Majesty demands, that the King of ... shall name your highness in this form, and with this addition in French, Notre très cher filz Henry, Roy d'Angleterre, Héritier de France; and thus in Latin, Praeclarissimus filius noster Henricus, Rex Angliae, et haeres Franciae.

<div align="right">(Henry V, V, ii, 354-60)</div>

Each detail of *Henry V* seems to be worked out in response to and in defiance of the celebrated speech of John of Gaunt, whose onomastic word-play - 'Old Gaunt indeed, and gaunt in being old' (*Richard II*, II, i, 74) - neatly conceals his own non-English origins, in that Flemish city anglicized as Ghent.

Thus, against the chauvinistic isolationism of Gaunt's vision –

This fortress built by nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war....

> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> Which serves it in the office of a wall....
>
> > (*Richard II*, II, i, 43-7)

we should find relief offered in the horizons of the French King's nuptial orisons:

> Take her, fair son, and from her blood raise up
> Issue to me, that the contending kingdoms
> Of France and England, whose very shores look pale
> With envy of each other's happiness,
> May cease their hatred.... (*Henry V*, V, ii, 366-70)

Both visions may be inadequate and sentimental, but to turn the white or chalky cliffs of Dover[7] into pale shores is progress of a kind: the unstable progress of translation and retranslation: cliff to *bord* or *marge*, to shore; white via *blanc* to pale.

Saussure's cardinal hypothesis is that words function not by virtue of their diachronic etymologies, but through their structural synchronic positioning, in a system of differences without positive terms. In the 1920s and 30s, in the Prague Linguistic Circle, N.S. Trubetskoy, with his friend Roman Jakobson, came to understand entire languages as themselves functioning in a similar way, their lexical and syntactic features being modified in the interests of either assimilation to, or differentiation from neighbouring languages. That languages from different 'families' show assimilative features had led earlier linguists to the concept of the *Sprachbund* - a bond between contiguous languages independent of or in excess of any philological connections. The figure of the *Sprachbund* was presumably taken from the world of trade, a customs union. Most of

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[7] In *Henry VI, Part Two*, III ii 101, the exiled Queen Margaret looks back at 'Albion's wished coast': 'As far as I could ken thy chalky cliffs'. The laments of Mowbray and Margaret are conflated in Macaulay's 'A Jacobite's Epitaph' c. 1850: 'By those white cliffs I never more must see,/By that dear language which I spake like thee....', after which the white cliffs of Dover enter popular mythology and song. We should recall the earlier and earthier instance of those cliffs, in *The Comedy of Errors*, when one Dromio is describing his twin's wife as a globe: 'Where England? I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no whiteness in them.' (III, ii, 133)

the work on *Sprachbund* has been concerned with assimilation: Trubetskoy was the first scholar to be interested in the way in which languages *diverge* from their neighbours, not the better but the *worse* to be understood. (Jakobson, 1990: 180-83, 204) The divergence in pronunciation between Swedish and Danish might be taken as exemplary of such bonded differentiation. And in pursuit of an analogous differentiation in the coinage, one makes, not a common currency, but a hole in one's own sovereign.

The Single European Currency ought to represent not a dialectical movement towards ever closer union - a displacement of sovereignty onto a higher plane - but rather a radical rearrangement of the economy of signs, the most obvious feature of which would be the reconfiguration of the coinage, of that contract between material and inscription, Lessing's *epigram*, on which sovereignty has for so long been, somewhat dubiously, grounded. Our currency is already for the most part virtual, our financial signs are mostly in the negative, and the discourse of credit may be leading us into an arithmetic in which value, like transcendence, is always and necessarily an absence. The physical model of balance - balance of payments, double-column bookkeeping, with which the book (liber = book, libra = balance, hence livre = pound sterling; note also libellule, the butterfly on the Danish 100 crown note) is so intimately, almost epigrammatically bound - that physical model is being replaced by the semiotic chain, or better, by the semiotic scroll, from which there is no escape: the virtual scroll of the virtual text, without an outside.

If such thoughts are abstract, consider Kant's play with the Negative, what became of it in Hegel, and then what happened in the most radical commentary on Hegel, the seminars given by Alexandre Kojève in Paris in the 1930s, from which all that is most radical in recent European thought seems to have derived its momentum. The European Union is not entirely unrelated to 'Continental philosophy'. (Nor would certain of the enemies of both be surprised to learn of a connection.) It is, I think, not well-known that after 1945 Kojève withdrew from philosophy and became an influential political adviser. An anecdote reported by Lionel Abel deserves wider notice (and

scrutiny): General de Gaulle's notorious, brusque "non" to British application for membership of the EEC was directly due to Kojève, who had explained to de Gaulle that, British philosophers being naive empiricists, Britain would be a hindrance, and not only at the theoretical level, to the project of the new Europe.[8] Kojève was probably right, alas. It was their empiricism that led Anglo-Saxon thinkers in the eighteenth century to protest against the idea of paper money. Such an objection may be said to characterize empiricism, that tyranny of common sense; in the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson 'a paper currency is employed, when there is no bullion in the vaults.' (cited in Shell: 19)[9] Critical and theoretical thinking of the non-empirical kind which passes in English (and is largely passed by in English) as 'Continental philosophy' has prepared the way conceptually for the projected re-ordering of European semiosis.

It is in these terms, and at this critical moment in the very idea of 'Europe', that Anglophone Europeans might like to begin again to understand English literature, not as a monument, but as a body of watery signs, composed of nothing essential - all currency, fluidity, exchange without centre or fixity. The words that we speak do not issue from an inmost essence, but are always already echoes and recyclings of what we hear and hear of, of what we are always about to issue and spend.

Texts written in English might be defined, first of all, as texts not in the neighbouring languages; there is no way of appreciating those differences, or of understanding the material dynamics of literary traditions, or of the single common currency of literature, if we are in ignorance of those linguistic and literary contiguities. For almost the entire period in which the literatures of the modern languages have been studied, the model of study has been organic, as of a tree growing in its native soil, receiving some foreign influence

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[8] The intriguing anecdote, ascribed to Professor Stanley Rosen, is recorded by Lionel Abel in *The Intellectual Follies: A Memoir of the Literary Venture in New York and Paris* (New York: Norton, 1984), pp. 174-5.

[9] See also Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution*, Part One, Book II, 'The Paper Age': 'Bank-paper, wherewith you can still buy when there is no gold left.'

in the form of air-borne particles. We prefer not to recall the frailty of English, even after Chaucer: 'After the Norman Conquest English became as submerged as the Celtic languages are now; at the Council of Constance in the fifteenth century it was classed as a minor dialect of German.' (Frye: ix.) The organic and essentialist model can be replaced by one that is concerned not with monuments but with fluidity; one in which the sovereignty of a text is not inherent but is negotiated at its borders. To see Beowulf in the context of Norse literature; to read the Middle English lyric in the knowledge that Marie de France, living in England, chose to write her *Lais* in French; to see the achievements of 16th century English in the context both of the continuing Latin and revived Greek traditions, as well as of all the other emerging European vernaculars; to be aware always of the pressures and temptations of Gaelic, Erse and Welsh; to acknowledge that many English poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were as adept at Latin as at English verse; to value translation , not as a derivative and contingent process, but as the prime motive and constitutive force of language; to see exile not as an aberration in English literary history but as normative, as it so plainly is for the lexicon; to understand that the English language - lexically the most hybridized of all European tongues - has been nobody's birthright, but always a contested domain of calculation and ideology.

And in pursuit of such an understanding of literature written in English, there may be no necessary advantage in working within the native-English-speaking world, nor any disadvantage in thinking with students and colleagues for whom English is not the 'native tongue' but a challenge to tongue and lip, and fluency a deliberated attainment. For these reasons - not essential but systemic, reasons which validate exchange around an empty centre, a hollow crown - I count myself privileged to be poised on two rims, of Europe, whose currency may yet be one, and of the Østersø, whose word is sterling yet.

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The Wycliffite Bible and 'Central Midland Standard': Assessing the Manuscript Evidence[*]

Matti Peikola

1. CMS and late Middle English written standards

M. L. Samuels' article "Some applications of Middle English dialectology" (1963/1989) belongs to those rare pieces of scholarship which continue to be discussed and debated forty years after their original publication. Basing his arguments largely on orthographic evidence, Samuels outlined four types of incipient written standard in late ME (Types I-IV). Of these, Type IV ('The Chancery Standard') is the one most widely discussed by subsequent scholars with regard to its role in the evolution of Standard English (see e.g. Fisher 1996; cf. Benskin 1992, 2002). The interest shown in Type I ('The Central Midland Standard' or CMS) has been of a different, less diachronic kind, because its usage seems to have waned towards the end of the 15th century.

Why did CMS decline in spite of its apparent initial success and wide dissemination at the turn of the 15th century? The fate of its usage has sometimes been linked with that of the Lollards; since Wycliffite texts have traditionally been viewed as the core of the

writing produced in Type I (Samuels 1963/1989), the stigmatisation of Wycliffism has been presumed to have cast a shadow over the prestige of CMS (e.g. Scragg 1974: 31, Burnley 1989). It is also possible to see the ultimate reason for the demise of CMS in its failure to make its way into administrative writing. Recent research on standardisation shows that this function is likely to be decisive in the ultimate establishment of a standard language (e.g. Milroy 1994, Rissanen 2000). The possible association of Type I with the University of Oxford (Black forthcoming), and its widespread use in medical and scientific writing (Taavitsainen 2000, 2001) make CMS appear primarily as belonging to the academic register, in a marked functional contrast to the administrative Type IV.[1]

Before questions about the rise and fall of Type I can be meaningfully posed and answered, however, it is necessary to clarify in what sense, if any, can CMS really be regarded as a coherent, historically attestable entity. That Samuels' Types can hardly be viewed as standards proper is a position currently shared by most scholars. Although we have much evidence of late medieval awareness of orthographic variation in English, and comments about the communicative facility provided by Midland speech can be found in coeval sources, it is highly doubtful whether these attitudes as yet betokened an intentional prescriptivist ideology of standardisation (see Burnley 1989).[2] The methodological difficulty

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[1] Black's (forthcoming) well-argued association of the origins of CMS with Oxford introduces a meaningful contextual link between the seemingly disparate Wycliffite and medical/scientific textual components of Type I. I am grateful to Merja Black for kindly allowing me to read her paper in manuscript.

[2] The position taken by Samuels and subsequently supported e.g. by Sandved (1981) and Benskin (1992) views standardisation primarily as a process in which a variety of the written language spreads by imitation outside the immediate geographical location or social group where it originated. Typically such imitation is seen to be motivated by the high-prestige status of the variety, although communicative facilitation offered by the variety could also play a role in the process. Scholars emphasising the prescriptive nature of standardisation maintain that these criteria are not sufficient in themselves in defining a standard language; what is ultimately required is imposition of the variety from above and the presence of a language ideology which stigmatises variation and seeks to minimise it by explicit prescription (see e.g. Milroy 1994, Milroy 2000, Milroy & Milroy 1999, Stein 1994). For a good summary account of recent theoretical approaches to linguistic standardisation, see Taavitsainen & Melchers (1999).

of reconstructing a standard language almost entirely from orthographic evidence has also been noted by those researchers who prefer to see standardisation as a phenomenon extending to all levels of language (e.g. Wright 1996, Rissanen 2000).

A further difficulty with Samuels' Types as standards proper has to do with the degree of their internal consistency in terms of the widely recognised criterion for a standard formulated by Haugen (1966) as "minimal variation in form" (see Smith 1992, Black forthcoming).[3] The presence of internal variation in CMS was recognised early on by Samuels himself when he identified a "more northerly sub-type" in addition to the main variety (1969/1989: 141). That variation is likely to be even subtler is suggested by Sandved's (1981) cogent argument about the boundary between CMS and more local dialects as clinal rather than absolute.

Recent empirical studies by Taavitsainen and Smith contribute further to the recognition of variation within CMS. Taavitsainen (2000) observes that the variety of CMS used in a large number of ME medical manuscripts differs to some extent from that found in Wycliffite writings. Smith's (1996: 70-71) comparison of single manuscripts of six texts traditionally associated with Lollardy reveals considerable variation within the body of Wycliffite writings itself. Given that Wycliffite texts played a pivotal role in the original definition of CMS by Samuels, it turns out, rather surprisingly, that none of the texts Smith analyses contains the expected forms of all those diagnostic items he investigates. The degree of variation witnessed prompts Smith to view CMS as a *standardised/focused* language/usage rather than as a *standard* one in the strict sense. This concept, Smith (1996: 66, 67) explains, stands for "a centripetal norm" – "a sort of mean towards which scribes tend" – rather than a fixed and prescribed entity followed by scribes (see also Smith 1992, 2000; Black 1999, forthcoming).

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[3] Haugen's perhaps slightly misleading term for this purely language-internal criterion is *codification*. See Smith (1992) for the application of this and Haugen's three other criteria to Samuels' Types.

2. The present study: aims, methods and materials

Smith's and Taavitsainen's findings imply that it is difficult to sustain a 'grand unifying theory' about CMS as a monolithic usage – a system conceptualised as a single entity by late medieval English scribes working at different times in different locations and on texts of different genres and registers. Although there does not seem to be any immediate reason to discard the concept when used as an umbrella term for supra-local late ME orthographies consisting of central Midland features, it can be argued that its more concrete historical contextualisation and textual pinpointing would necessitate a bottom-up approach, in which the first goal of research is the description of CMS as it appears in manuscripts of a single ME text. This method would ideally enable the researcher to relate orthographic concerns of individual scribes with constraints of textual tradition and of the immediate copying situation.[4]

The present paper reports the results of a pilot study in which the method is applied to a sample of manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible (WB). This choice of primary material is motivated by the special status of WB among proposed CMS texts. Judging from the more than 230 extant manuscripts which contain the text in whole or in part, the production figures of WB must have surpassed by far those of other proposed CMS texts; this is also likely to reflect its degree of popularity and extent of dissemination in late medieval England.[5] Moreover, Samuels' (1963/1989) reference to Skeat and Dibelius as scholars who had previously discussed Type I implies that CMS was in the first place largely extrapolated from WB usage (see Skeat 1895-96, Dibelius 1901; cf. Fristedt 1953: 39-42). With

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[4] Smith (1983) provides an insightful example of the potential residing in situated analysis of an individual scribe's behaviour. For an important theoretical discussion of processes involved in scribal treatment of the language of exemplars, see Benskin & Laing (1981); papers 12-19 in Laing (ed. 1989) illustrate how these processes work in individual manuscripts.

[5] The most comprehensive list of WB manuscripts is still the preliminary account published by Lindberg (1970); users of the list need to be aware of its several double entries and occasionally outdated ownership/repository information. For an excellent historical and textual account of WB in the context of Lollard biblical scholarship, see Hudson (1988: 238-247).

respect to the conceptual history of CMS it therefore seems legitimate to regard WB as its archetypal representative.

The very large number of surviving copies makes the linguistic and codicological uniformity associated with manuscripts of WB appear particularly intriguing. This association has been made in particular for the so-called Later Version (LV), represented by some 85% of the surviving manuscripts (as estimated by von Nolcken 1997). The idea itself goes back at least to the mid-nineteenth-century edition of WB by Forshall and Madden, who in their introduction asserted that "[t]he copies of this later version present so great an uniformity, that their peculiarities scarcely admit of an observation" (Forshall & Madden 1850: xxxi). Samuels' (1963/1989: 79, n. 5) comment that "[p]ractically all copies of the later version" are written in CMS reflects the same position from a more strictly linguistic perspective. Codicological aspects of this uniformity are most clearly evident in Doyle's (1983) and Hudson's (1989) identification of similarities between the mise-en-page of LV New Testament manuscripts. Doyle (1983: 169) notes the survival of "innumerable copies" of the text "produced ... to common patterns, in similar text-hands and with decoration of professional standards"; in a similar vein, Hudson (1989: 131) observes that "[t]he manuscripts vary in type and quality a good deal less than might be expected given the history of the text". Whether these similarities are explained by the association of the manuscripts with patterns of professional book-production in the metropolitan area, as Doyle (1983, 1990, 1997) surmises, or whether some provincial Lollard scriptoria might have been responsible for what looks like the 'mass production' of copies, are questions which require a considerable amount of further scrutiny and comparison of manuscript data to be resolved.

For the present paper, the spelling of eight diagnostic CMS items was analysed in manuscripts of the Later Version housed in the Bodleian Library (BOD), the British Library (BL), Cambridge University Library (CUL), the John Rylands Library (JRL), and Lambeth Palace. To facilitate explicit textual comparisons between the copies and a straightforward conversion of the results into

percentages, ten fixed loci for each item in the gospel of Matthew were monitored. Matthew was chosen because it provided the largest number of surviving manuscripts. If the output of more than one scribe was clearly discernible in the monitored loci in one manuscript, the scribe responsible for a majority of the forms was focused upon. If the number and division of hands was judged to be ambiguous, no analysis was attempted. As a result, 68 LV manuscripts (hands) were included in the study (see Appendix I).

The items analysed derive from Samuels' early work on CMS. In the original formulation of the case (Samuels 1963/1989), seven diagnostic forms for Type I were given: *sich* for 'SUCH', *mych* for 'MUCH', *ony* for 'ANY', *silf* for 'SELF', *stide* for 'STEAD', *ʒouun* for 'GIVEN', and *siʒ* for 'SAW'. Of these, 'MUCH', 'ANY', 'SELF', 'GIVEN' and 'SAW' were chosen for the present study; the disqualification of 'SUCH' and 'STEAD' was due to their very low number of occurrences in Matthew. In Samuels (1969/1989), the doubling of vowel symbols – of *i* in particular – emerges as a further characteristic of Type I, with spellings such as *wijf* for 'WIFE'. As representatives of this category, three frequently occurring items were chosen: 'FIRE' (expected CMS form *fijr*), 'LIFE' (*lijf*), and 'LIKE' (*lijc*). (See Appendix II for the loci analysed).

Before moving on to discuss the results, it is necessary to consider for a moment the preferable level at which orthographic variation should be measured in the present case. This consideration is motivated by a methodological decision made by Samuels, whereby the concept of CMS became further abstracted and its status as a *written* usage was rendered more ambiguous. Samuels' (1963/1989, 1969/1989) characterisation of CMS shows, somewhat oddly, that even though Type I is viewed as a written standard, the diagnostic forms are represented at a level which essentially corresponds to variation in the spoken system. Thus *mych*, for example, reflects at least the scribal forms "mych", "myche", "mich", "miche"; *siʒ* stands for at least "siʒ", "siʒe", "syʒ", "syʒe"; and *ʒouun* represents not just "ʒouun", "ʒouū", "ʒouen", and "ʒouē", but also the corresponding spellings with an initial "y" or "g". While such conflated forms make sense from a traditional dialectological

perspective preoccupied with explaining variation in the spoken system, it is doubtful whether in trying to explain scribal behaviour and the conceptualisation of a model of spelling to be imitated, a qualitative distinction can be drawn between say scribal preference of "mych", "moch" or "much" on the one hand and "mych", "mich" or "miche" on the other. What seems to be crucial here is whether the scribe – when tending towards the mean in his mind's eye (cf. Smith 1996) – seeks to adhere only to those elements of orthography which correspond to phonological variation, or whether the mean also incorporates into itself elements that pertain solely to the graphological domain (cf. McIntosh 1974/1989). It appears likely that observing the orthography of scribes at the graphemic level (see Robinson & Solopova 1993) will increase the degree of variation witnessed and thereby further attenuate the original case for CMS as a historically attested single model. At the same time, however, this methodological decision can be expected to bring to light new patterns of variation at a level which is closer to concrete scribal output, thereby helping us reconstruct less abstract and historically more tenable orthographic models followed by scribes.

3. CMS *in manuscript context: preliminary results*

After the orthographic data had been collected, a computation was carried out to establish the majority (graphemic) spelling form of each diagnostic item in each manuscript. A summary of this information for all manuscripts indicates that the most common majority forms for each item comprise *myche* (simple majority form in 55 of the 68 manuscripts/hands), *fier* (54), *silf* (52), *lijf* (48), *ony* (47), *lijk* (43), *siȝ* (32), and *ȝouū* (27). As illustrated in Figures 1-8 in Appendix III, these forms clearly emerge as the leading ones in the manuscripts. Only for the last item 'GIVEN' do the forms *ȝouen* (18) and *ȝouē* (13) appear as substantial rivals. That *ȝouū* was, however, for many scribes *the* expected written form of 'GIVEN' and not just an abbreviated variant of *ȝouun* used at constrained positions which required the saving of space (typically at line-

endings) is suggested by its presence as the sole form of 'GIVEN' in no less than 18 manuscripts (see Figure 8). With *ʒouen* and *ʒouē*, the corresponding figure is significantly lower – 3 and 0 respectively – which may indicate that scribes more readily tended to perceive them as alloforms of a single variant.

If this list of the commonest majority forms is compared with Samuels' diagnostic forms, it will be seen that with the exception of *fier* they can all be situated under the broadly conceived CMS umbrella. The striking dominance of *fier* (54) over the expected *fijr* (6) indicates that individual scribes clearly did not give an identical treatment to all common words for which a potential spelling with a doubled vowel existed, but that their preferences varied from one item to the next. This situation introduces a strong caveat against generalising statements concerning the diagnostic feature in question.

The emergence of a single conspicuous majority form for each diagnostic item investigated might at first glance be interpreted as evidence for a relatively systematic and wide-spread sub-variety of CMS in manuscripts of LV. Such an appearance is somewhat deceptive, however, because the results just discussed do not truly reflect the output of individual scribes in terms of their actual repertories of majority forms. This can be verified by a database query designed to find those manuscripts (hands) in which all eight forms in question (*fier*, *ʒouū*, *lijf*, *lijk*, *myche*, *ony*, *siʒ* and *silf*) occur as the majority variant. The surprising result of the query is that among the 68 manuscripts there is only one which fulfils this criterion – a copy of the gospels in BOD Selden Supra 49. Under closer critical scrutiny even this single finding proves to be somewhat suspect in terms of its relevance and comparability, since the manuscript is one of those two codices which were included in the analysis although the output of two scribes was identified in Matthew. Of these hands, that with the larger proportion of monitored loci (up to 14:30) was analysed. However, as it contains only 42 of the usual 80 (i.e. 10x8) occurrences (with only 2 instances of 'ANY', 3 of 'LIFE', and 4 of 'SELF'), it can be suspected that the significantly lower number of instances has created a false impression of orthographic systematicity. To sum up the discussion so far, it seems thus safe to conclude that although the profile of majority forms

identified above (*fier, silf, lijf, ony, lijk, si3, 3ouū*) does in broad terms fulfil the criteria for an abstract Type I mean for the present sample of LV manuscripts (and quite likely also for the manuscripts of LV on the whole), it cannot be regarded as a concrete sub-variety of CMS actually attested in any individual scribal profile investigated.

Rather than focusing on majority forms only, the adherence of individual scribes to a standardised orthographic usage can more meaningfully be measured by investigating the degree of variation a scribe exhibits in reproducing the diagnostic items. A database query along these lines shows that among the 68 LV manuscripts examined there is one strikingly uniform instance in which no spelling variation at all can be witnessed among the ten loci of each item. This is a copy of the gospels in CUL Add. 6684, a pocket-size book (ca. 120x85 mm) written in small textura semiquadrata with a single-column layout. As is often the case for WB, nothing is known about the medieval provenance of the manuscript. The profile of diagnostic items – *fyre, 3ouū, liyf, liyk, miche, ony, saw* and *self* – indicates that despite the high degree of systematicity in evidence, the orthography clearly cannot be situated even within the broadly defined Type I. Somewhat ironically, the orthographically most highly focused hand in the allegedly archetypal CMS text thus represents a non-CMS usage.

No other profile of majority forms in the material corresponds to that in CUL Add. 6684. Between other manuscripts with a highly focused orthography, however, some interesting correspondences can be found. Let us take a look at two examples.

Perhaps the most conspicuous case is that of the New Testament manuscripts Lambeth Palace 1150-51 and Sion College Arc L 40.2/E2, which share an identical profile of both majority and minority forms. The degree of orthographic variation in both manuscripts is distinctively low: *fier, 3ouū, myche, liyf, liyk, ony* and *silf* all occur as the sole forms; for the eighth item 'SAW', *say* represents 80% of the occurrences, with *si3* as a 20% minority form. That the two instances of *si3* are found at identical loci in both manuscripts (Mt. 14:30 – Vulgate *videns*, Early Version *seende*; Mt. 22:11 –Vulgate *vidit*, Early Version *sa3*) may bespeak a close textual relationship between the copies (see

Benskin 1977: 510 for a similar instance in two mss of the *Secreta Secretorum*). Discrepancies between the manuscripts in their intralinear glosses and their chapter-internal subdivision of text suggest, however, that it may be premature to view one as a direct copy of the other. A proper collation of the copies is clearly called for.

Another explanation of the identical profiles shared by the two manuscripts is obviously that they do not result from close scribal attention and imitation, but that both profiles represent the output of one and the same scribe. Both manuscripts are written in small well-formed textura semiquadrata/rotunda of a kind broadly characteristic of a large number of LV manuscripts. While a detailed comparison of the graphetic minutiae of the hands on the lines advocated by McIntosh (1974/1989) and Doyle (1994) must await, it is worth observing at this point that in both manuscripts the scribe has an unusual preference for writing above the top line of ruling.

Although the two manuscripts vary in their mise-en-page to an extent which does not immediately suggest their production in a single scriptorium or through a shared network of artisans' workshops (cf. Christianson 1999), it is interesting that among the 68 manuscripts examined there is also a third codex which contains an almost identical profile of majority and minority forms – a copy of the New Testament in BOD Laud misc. 361. In fact, the only difference between the profiles is that in the Laud copy there is one interfering instance of *lik* at Mt. 13:44, written in a compressed manner which indicates that the scribe was probably constrained by the line-ending position to produce the shorter *lik* instead of his regular *liyk*. That the manuscript seems to bear a close relationship to the Lambeth and Sion College copies textually too is further suggested by the occurrence of its two instances of *siȝ* in exactly the same positions as in them (i.e. Mt. 14:30, Mt. 22:11).[6]

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[6] Among the WB codices investigated for the present paper, there are also two other New Testament manuscripts (BL Harley 4890, BOD Laud misc. 388) in which *siȝ* is found only at Mt. 14:30 and 22:11 while *say* occurs in all other monitored loci. Although their majority/minority profiles do not otherwise conform to those of Lambeth 1150-51, Sion Arc L. 40.2/E2 and Laud misc. 361, it is worth noting that in all five manuscripts there is in general very little graphemic variation in the spelling of the eight diagnostic items.

In the second example, a shared profile between manuscripts seems more clearly than in the first one to betoken their common origin. The codices in question are the Bodleian Library manuscripts Bodley 183 and Fairfax 11 – both professionally executed copies of the New Testament, the former with some Old Testament material appended to it. De Hamel (2001: 178) argues that "the two books were certainly written by the same scribe and were apparently decorated by the same illuminator" and thinks it likely that they were "disseminated through the London book trade" (see de Hamel 2001: 179 for a coloured image of the mise-en-page of both mss). Scott (1996: 29) associates the initial and border illumination in Fairfax 11 with the influence of the Southern English "Carmelite large-initial style" of the turn of the 15th century – a style archetypally represented by the exquisite Carmelite missal which now survives in BL Add. 29704-05, 44892 and in other fragments.

De Hamel's paleographically motivated argument of a single scribe is strongly supported by the identical majority profiles of the manuscripts (*fier, ȝouē, myche, lijf, lijk, ony, say, silf*) and the close agreement between the types and frequencies of their minority forms (Bodley: *ȝouen* 30%, *sai* 30%; Fairfax: *ȝouen* 40%, *sai* 20%, *liyf* 10%). Further evidence in support of a single scribe/scriptorium is provided by similarities in the style of catchwords in the manuscripts, their shared complex two-column ruling pattern, and – last but not least – by the strikingly matching measurements between the various proportions of their ruling. While the types of initials used for the lower levels of the *ordinatio* in these two manuscripts (i.e. for prologues and chapters) do not exactly correspond – perhaps for reasons having to do with the resources of the customers for whom the codices were made – it is more telling with regard to a common origin of the codices that the line height reserved by the scribe for the initials of these elements of textual hierarchy is identical in both copies.

De Hamel (2001: 178) tentatively also associates a third LV New Testament manuscript with the same "commercial production line". In the absence of a systematic graphetic study of the hand of Bodley 665, its similarity with Bodley 183 and Fairfax 11 remains to be properly assessed. The adoption of another type of ruling pattern

and the different placement of catchwords, together with a distinctively different orthographic profile with 100% majority forms such as *eny* and *lyke*, indicates, however, that the identification of the scribe is by no means self-evident.[7]

4. Conclusion

In the pilot study reported in this paper, features of Type I orthography were examined in a large sample of manuscripts of the Later Version of the Wycliffite Bible. The investigation showed that when scribal data for all 68 hands surveyed were combined, a particular spelling variant clearly emerged as the dominant one for each diagnostic CMS item. No single hand, however, contained these dominant forms of all eight items. While the dominant profile consisting of *fier*, *ʒouū*, *lijf*, *lijk*, *myche*, *ony*, *siʒ* and *silf* can therefore be regarded as an abstract CMS mean for LV scribes, in accordance with Smith's concept of a focused usage, the alleged status of LV as the prototypical 'invariable' Type I text has to be questioned when variation is measured at graphemic level.

When the degree of variation in the output of individual scribes was gauged, a few instances of highly standardised orthography were found. None of these, however, was strictly placeable under Samuels' original diagnostic profile for Type I, and the most focused of the usages in CUL Add. 6684 fell clearly outside even the more broadly conceived notion of CMS as an abstract superordinate category.

To exemplify the framework within which further investigation of late ME standardised orthographies appears most fruitful, two instances of a shared orthographic profile between LV manuscripts were briefly reviewed. Here analysis of spelling forms was combined with codicological and text-critical concerns to assess the

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[7] It is obviously not tenable to presume that an individual scribe's profile should be seen as immutable. Not only is the scribe's output prone to be affected in various ways by the orthography of the exemplar being copied at any one time (see e.g. Hudson 1966, Benskin & Laing 1981, Smith 1997), but, as Smith (1983: 109) observes, there is also a diachronic systemic element involved in that "the nature of scribe's repertoire is changing under the influence of the manuscripts he is copying".

implications of orthographic uniformity for the circumstances in which the codices were produced. The case of Bodley 183 and Fairfax 11 in particular encourages the idea that relationships between orthographic and codicological features are worth pursuing further, and that by such correlation it may eventually be possible to associate particular sub-varieties of CMS with the output of individual professional scribes working in specific historical locales for book-production (cf. Mooney 2000). Needless to say, for manuscripts of widely copied texts such as WB, a thorough exploration of the issue would require a formidable investment in photographic/digital resources to enable meticulous comparison of orthographic and codicological minutiae in manuscripts housed in different repositories.

In the long run, it would be logical to extend these concerns to other texts found in the manuscript contexts of the text first scrutinised, thereby working our way gradually towards larger textual networks which are historically motivated through shared patterns of transmission. I would like to argue that only by means of such a multistage inductive procedure will it ultimately be possible to make sense of scribal patterns of variation identified under the broad CMS umbrella.

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Appendices

I Library sigla of the 68 LV manuscripts used as primary source material (with catalogue numbers in parentheses as given in the inventory of the WB manuscripts by Lindberg 1970)

BL Add. 15517 (40)

BL Arundel 104 (29)

BL Cotton Claudius E.ii (9)

BL Egerton 1165 (33)

BL Egerton 1171 (34)

BL Harley 272 (10)

BL Harley 984 (13)

BL Harley 1212 (14)

BL Harley 2309 (18)

BL Harley 4027 (20)

BL Harley 4890 (21)

BL Harley 5017 (22)

BL Lansdowne 407 (26)

BL Lansdowne 455 (28)

BL Royal 1.A.iv (1)

BL Royal 1.A.x (2)

BL Royal 1.A.xii (3)

BL Royal 1.C.viii (6)

BOD Ashmole 1517 (89)

BOD Bodley 183 (59)

BOD Bodley 277 (60)

BOD Bodley 531 (62)

BOD Bodley 665 (63)

BOD Bodley 979 (67)

BOD Douce 240 (85)

BOD Douce 265 (86)

BOD e Musaeo 110 (70)

BOD Fairfax 2 (71)

BOD Fairfax 11 (72)

BOD Gough Eccl. Top 5 (83)

BOD Junius 29 (75)

BOD Laud misc. 24 (52)

BOD Laud misc. 25 (53)

BOD Laud misc. 36 (55)

BOD Laud misc. 207 (57)

BOD Laud misc. 361 (58)

BOD Laud misc. 388
(not in Lindberg 1970)

BOD Lyell 26 (189)

BOD Rawlinson C.237 (77)

BOD Rawlinson C.257 (78)

BOD Rawlinson C.259 (80)

BOD Rawlinson C.752 (81)

BOD Rawlinson C.883 (82)

BOD Selden Supra 49 (68)

BOD Selden Supra 51 (69)

CUL Add. 6680 (191)

CUL Add. 6683 (176)

CUL Add. 6684 (229)

CUL Dd.1.27 (106)

CUL Gg.6.8 (108)

CUL Kk.1.8 (110)

CUL Ll.1.13 (111)

CUL Mm.2.15 (112)

JRL Eng. 3 (173, 204)

JRL Eng. 76 (205)

JRL Eng. 79 (159)

JRL Eng. 80 (157)

JRL Eng. 91 (209)

Lambeth Palace 25 (46)

Lambeth Palace 369 (47)

Lambeth Palace 532 (48)

Lambeth Palace 547 (49)

Lambeth Palace 1150-51 (51)

Lambeth Palace 1366 (185)

Oxford, Brasenose College 10 (90) [Reposited in the Bodleian Library]

Oxford, Lincoln College Lat. 119 (96) [Reposited in the Bodleian Library]

Oxford, Oriel College 80 (100) [Reposited in the Bodleian Library]

Sion College Arc L 40.2/E2 (43) [Reposited in Lambeth Palace]

II Loci analysed in the gospel of Matthew, with an indication of the relevant Type I item.

3:10 fire, 3:11 fire, 3:12 fire, 4:16 saw, 4:18 saw, 4:21 saw, 5:22 fire, 5:40 any, 6:7 much, 6:7 much, 6:8 like, 6:25 life, 6:25 life, 6:30 much, 7:7 given, 7:14 life, 7:19 fire, 8:1 much, 8:14 saw, 8:18 saw, 8:18 much, 12:12 much, 12:19 any, 12:22 saw, 12:25 self, 12:25 self, 12:26 self, 12:39 given, 13:2 much, 13:5 much, 13:11 given, 13:11 given, 13:12 given, 13:21 self, 13:24 like, 13:31 like, 13:33 like, 13:40 fire, 13:42 fire, 13:44 like, 13:45 like, 13:47 like, 13:50 fire, 13:52 like, 14:9 given, 14:11 given, 14:14 saw, 14:30 saw, 16:4 given, 16:24 any, 16:24 life, 16:24 self, 16:25 life, 18:8 fire, 18:8 life, 18:9 fire, 18:9 life, 19:2 much, 19:11 given, 19:12 self, 19:16 life, 19:17 life, 19:19 self, 19:29 life, 21:3 any, 21:3 any, 21:8 much, 21:19 saw, 21:25 self, 21:38 self, 21:43 given, 22:2 like, 22:11 saw, 22:16 any, 22:24 any, 22:39 like, 22:39 self, 22:46 any, 24:17 any, 24:23 any.

III Distribution of majority spelling forms in the manuscripts (Figures 1-8)

In the Figures, "g+" stands for _ʒ_, "u$" for _ū_; and "e$" for _ē_.

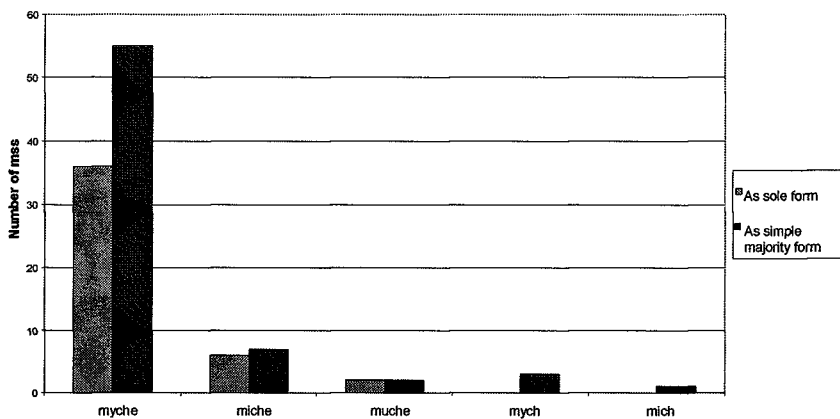Figure 1: Distribution of majority forms for 'MUCH'

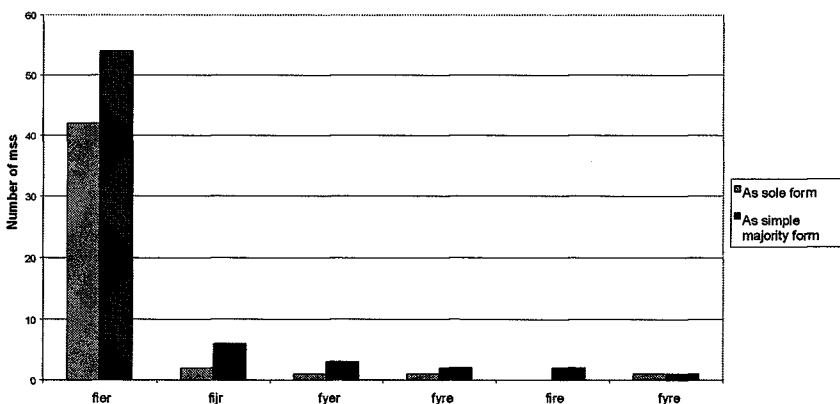Figure 2: Distribution of majority forms for 'FIRE'

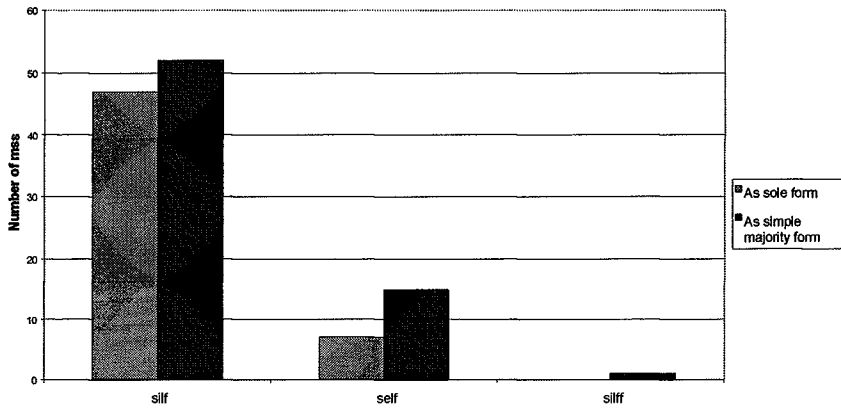Figure 3: Distribution of majority forms for 'SELF'

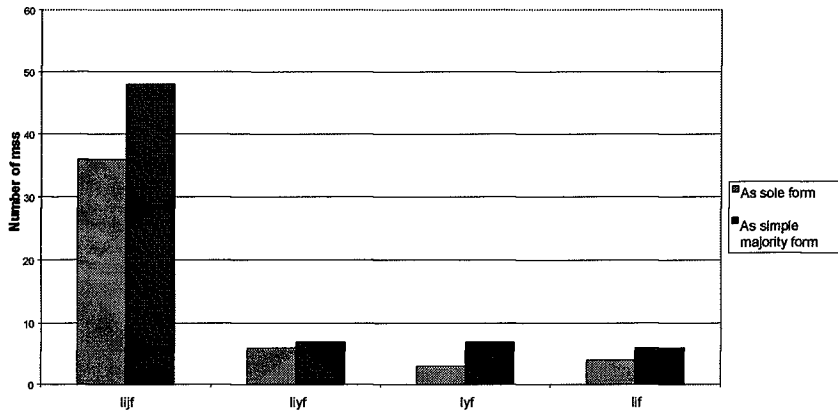Figure 4: Distribution of majority forms for 'LIFE'
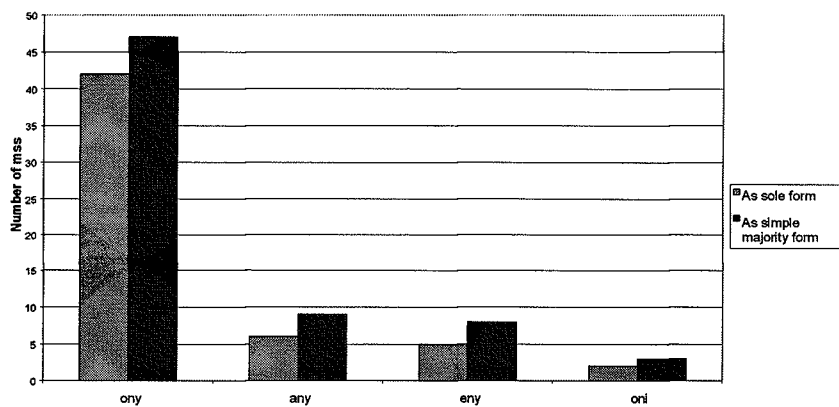
Figure 5: Distribution of majority forms for 'ANY'

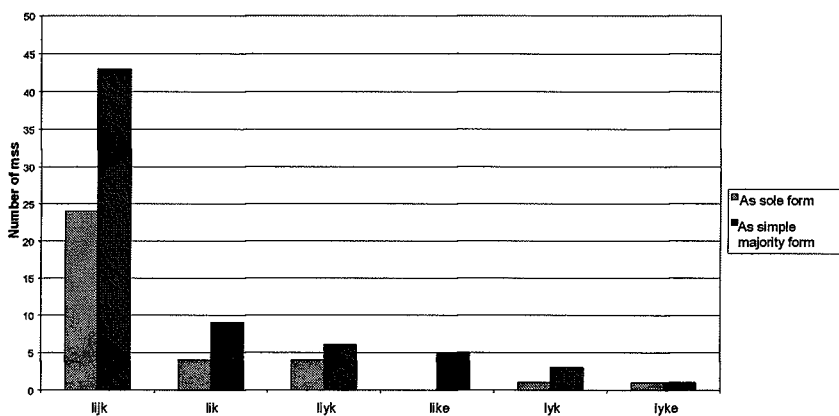Figure 6: Distribution of majority forms for 'LIKE'

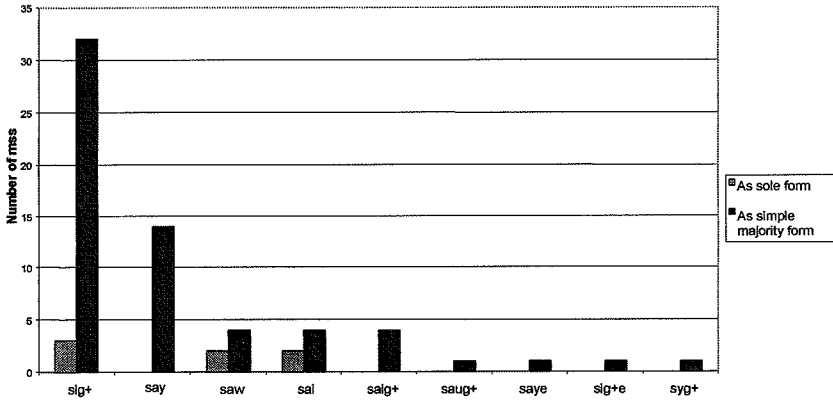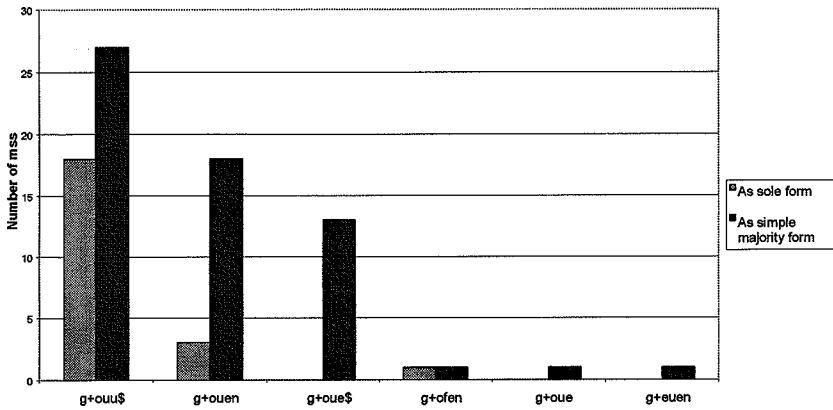Figure 7: Distribution of majority forms for 'SAW'

Figure 8: Distribution of majority forms for 'GIVEN'

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Towards a Unified Representation of English and Norwegian Auxiliaries[1]

HELENE HAUGE

1. Introduction

Superficially, the auxiliary systems of Norwegian and English seem to be rather different, but in this paper I will attempt to show that these cross-linguistic differences are not due to the auxiliaries *per se*, but rather due to intervening factors which affect the systems for representing the auxiliaries. In other words, Norwegian and English auxiliaries appear to be highly similar once these other factors have been accounted for.

The focus for the discussion in this paper is the syntactic representation of the auxiliary systems in English and Norwegian from a Principles and Parameters perspective. Auxiliary representation is interrelated with many other syntactic phenomena, and thus the treatment of auxiliaries may affect how other phenomena are approached. For instance, the question of how to analyse adverbial elements and the structural representation of negation may potentially be seen in close correlation with the syntax of auxiliaries. By means of the Principles and Parameters Theory, it is possible to account accurately for the auxiliary systems in the two languages, and on that basis outline which properties they share and which they do not share.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 outlines some of the characteristics of English and Norwegian

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auxiliaries. Section 3 provides a structural representation of auxiliaries that applies to both languages. Section 4 presents a discussion of the role of negation in relation to auxiliaries, and section 5 addresses auxiliaries with reference to the Head Movement Constraint.

2. A descriptive account of English and Norwegian auxiliaries

In this section I will briefly describe some salient properties of English and Norwegian auxiliaries with particular focus on the so-called NICE properties of English auxiliaries.

Although auxiliaries are often discussed as a single class, a distinction should be made between *primary* and *secondary*, or modal, auxiliaries. According to Palmer (1987) *be, have* and *do* constitute the group of primary auxiliaries in English, and *will, shall, can, may, must, ought, dare* and *need* constitute the group of modal auxiliaries. Faarlund, Lie and Vannebo (1997) list *være, ha* and *bli* as the primary auxiliaries in Norwegian, whereas *ville, skulle, kunne, måtte, burde, lyte* (in Nynorsk) constitute the group referred to as secondary auxiliaries – or modals.[2]

NICE properties

As pointed out above, auxiliary properties are probably not universal, and therefore the characteristics of auxiliaries often vary between languages. According to Palmer (1987), English is

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[2] Note that according to Palmer (1987) *dare* and *need* are more problematic auxiliaries since, in terms of the NICE properties, they have some forms that have auxiliary features and others that have lexical features. The distribution of the auxiliary forms is defective. In relation to negation and inversion they clearly appear to be auxiliaries: Not only are these verbs used in negation and inversion, but they also share the property of modal auxiliaries in not having an –*s* suffix in present tense third person singular. There are no such forms as **needsn't* or **daresn't*. This observation has resulted in these verbs being referred to as *marginal* auxiliaries. Faarlund, Lie and Vannebo (1997) list *tore* and *få* as having the same status in Norwegian.

characterized by what Huddleston (1976) denotes the NICE properties. These properties refer to English auxiliaries occurring with *negation, inversion, code* and *emphatic affirmation*.[3] In what follows, I will briefly outline the NICE properties of English auxiliaries and relate these to Norwegian data. For a thorough account of the NICE properties, confer Palmer (1987: 14-26).

Negation

Negation refers to the characteristic of English whereby auxiliaries have distinct negative forms with the negation (*not*) undergoing cliticization to form negative auxiliaries such as *isn't, haven't* and *shouldn't*. In English this is a property unique to auxiliaries.[4] Lexical verbs cannot form negatives in the same manner, as seen in (1a) and, as Palmer points out, it is not even possible for the negation *not* to follow the main verb, as seen in (1b):

(1)

    a. *I liken't sea lions.

    b. *I like not sea lions.

    c. I don't like sea lions.

(1c) shows that in order to have negation of a lexical verb, and still have a grammatically acceptable sentence, the appropriate form of the 'dummy' auxiliary *do* has to be inserted. This process is known as *do*-support; an issue I will address in more detail below.

    As far as Norwegian is concerned, cliticization of the negation is not unique to auxiliaries. In Norwegian, auxiliaries and lexical verbs

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[3] Palmer (1988) points out that auxiliary verbs need to be distinguished from what are usually referred to as catenatives, which include such verbs as *want, seem* and *keep*. These verbs are share many properties with auxiliaries in their relationships with other verbs, but the catenatives do not hold the NICE properties.

[4] According to Palmer, *may* provides a slight problem. There is no negative form **mayn't*, only *may not*. *Mightn't* occurs marginally with speakers of American English. Yet, although *may* does not occur with a negative form, it satisfies the other tests with regards to the NICE properties, and it has the characteristics of modals.

alike are acceptable with a cliticized negation, and therefore this cannot be seen as an auxiliary marker in Norwegian in the same manner as in English. However, this cliticization property is not manifested in written standard Norwegian, but it is frequent in spoken Norwegian. (*Han kan'ke spise fisk; han ser'ke på TV.*)

Inversion

The second of the NICE properties is inversion of the auxiliary and the subject in certain types of constructions. The most common type of construction where this occurs is in interrogative sentences, such as (2a). Subject-auxiliary inversion is also found in certain types of conditional adverbial clauses, such as (2b), and with some adverbs (expressing negative meaning) that are in initial position, as in (2c):

(2)

a. Is the clown coming?

b. Had I known about the appetite of seals, I'd never have shared my lunch.

c. Seldom had they seen such an animal.

As with negation, *do*-support takes place in these types of constructions when an auxiliary is not available (3b), since lexical verbs cannot undergo this kind of inversion in English (3a).[5]

(3)

a. *Comes the clown?

b. Does the clown come?

Again, inversion cannot be seen as an auxiliary property in Norwegian. Rather, it is a process that takes place with both lexical

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[5] There is also a different type of inversion in English which does not require an auxiliary verb. This construction is often referred to as *locative* inversion. In this stylistically marked construction, the initial element in most cases is a locative adverbial followed by a simple main verb and a subject DP at the end (e.g. *Down came a blackbird.*) See Hauge (1996) for an account.

and auxiliary verbs. Thus, we have inversion in question formation both with auxiliaries (4a) and with lexical verbs (4b):

(4)

a. Har klovnen kommet?

'Has the clown come?'

b. Kom klovnen?

came clown-the

'Did the clown come?'

That Norwegian allows inversion of lexical verbs as well as auxiliaries can be accounted for by the notion of verb movement. Verb movement implies movement of the finite verb to a position to the left of the subject. Norwegian has obligatory movement of any finite verb, whereas English only allows movement of finite auxiliaries. Thus, Norwegian interrogative clauses allow both lexical verbs and auxiliaries in the initial position. Additionally, as can be seen from the examples below in (5), the initial element of a declarative clause in Norwegian need not be of any particular type in order to cause inversion of subject and verb:

(5)

a. Heldigvis kom klovnen.

fortunately came clown-the

'Fortunately, the clown came.'

b. I går knuste klovnen to tallerkener.

yesterday broke clown-the two plates

'Yesterday the clown broke two plates'

Code

The third NICE characteristic of an auxiliary is code, referring to sentences in which a full verb is subsequently picked up by an auxiliary, in a similar manner to a noun being picked up by a

pronoun. This is often the case in constructions containing '... *and so*'. Examples of this are found in (6):

(6)

    a. I can swim, and so can the sea lions.

    b. I like fish, and so do they.

Again, *do*-support takes place when no auxiliary is available, as in the example in (6b). Following Haegeman & Guéron (1999) in their discussion of VP layers, it is natural to assume that the reference of *so* in (6b) is the VP *like fish*, and since the VP is represented by a nominal, the insertion of *do* is needed in order for the sentence to have a verb. The code characteristic also applies to Norwegian auxiliaries, as the examples in (7) show:

(7)

    a. Jeg *kan* svømme, og det *kan* sjøløvene også.

    I can swim, and that can sea-lions-the also

    'I can swim, and so can the sea lions.'

    b. Jeg liker fisk, og det *gjør* de også.

    I like fish, and that do they also

    'I like fish and so do they'

Interestingly, the same mechanisms apply in Norwegian and English in these types of constructions, i.e. Norwegian also applies do-insertion (by means of gjøre), as we see in (7b). If there is no auxiliary in the first clause, gjøre is inserted in the required position of the second clause.

Emphatic affirmation

The last NICE property is emphatic affirmation, where stress is on the auxiliary. In English there can be stress on any verbal form for focus purposes. What is particular about stress on the auxiliary is that it is used for emphatic affirmation of a doubtful statement or denial of a negative statement, as we can see in (8) below.

(8)

    a. I *can* come. (You are wrong to think that I cannot come!)

    b. We *did* see them. (You thought we did not see them!)

Norwegian appears to have the possibility of emphatic affirmation with all verbs – both lexical verbs and auxiliaries, and affirmation of a doubtful statement is unproblematic with lexical verbs.

As this account of auxiliaries shows, English and Norwegian auxiliaries cannot be said to have the same properties. In many cases, the difference seems to be related to *do*-support in English. *Do*-support clearly plays a structurally central role in English, whereas its Norwegian equivalent only plays a marginal role. Before we proceed to a discussion of the syntactic representation of auxiliaries, I will briefly address *do*-support in more detail.

Do-support

Do does not occur if there is another auxiliary present. The insertion of *do* is an operation that takes place when a verb is required in a certain position and the lexical verb cannot be in that position. As Palmer (1987) points out, *do* is a special type of auxiliary in that it is semantically empty and therefore only appears when grammatical rules of English require an auxiliary. Since English lexical verbs do not move from their original position, *do*-support must take place if a verb is required in another position, as we saw in relation to some of the NICE properties above. Thus, *do*-support has often been described as a last resort – a final attempt to save the sentence from being judged as unacceptable. I will come back to the structural representation of *do*-support below.

In the brief outline above, *do*-support plays a significant role in the representation of auxiliary constructions in English, whereas the Norwegian equivalent '*gjøre*-support' cannot be said to play an equally central part. This distinction can be accounted for in a fairly straightforward manner: since Norwegian lexical verbs are allowed to move out of their original position, no operation such as *do*-support is called for. Thus, the cases in which '*gjøre*-support' is called for in

Norwegian are much more rare. One such case though is topicalization of a VP:

(9)

> Spise fisk med kniv og gaffel gjør jeg aldri.
>
> eat fish with knife and fork do I never
>
> 'Eat fish with knife and fork I never do.'

Because the VP has been topicalized, the verb cannot fill the obligatory position in the Norwegian sentence, and the insertion of *gjøre* is provoked as a result.

3. Syntactic representation of auxiliaries

English and Norwegian are closely related languages that share many structural properties. For instance, they are both typologically classified as SVO languages. Yet, they differ in that Norwegian is a language with obligatory verb movement of both lexical verbs and auxiliaries, as mentioned briefly above, in contrast to English, which only allows movement of auxiliaries.[6] In order to account for this difference, generative grammar relies on the view that clausal structures have both lexical and functional projections. The functional projections are considered to be hierarchically above the lexical projections, where the functional projections are seen as carrying features that the lexical items need. As far as verbs are concerned, they need to combine with the appropriate verbal features (tense and agreement) of the relevant functional projection (IP). This combination of lexical items and functional features can be accounted for in different ways, for instance by means of verb movement; a view I will provisionally adopt. These ideas are

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[6] More specifically, Norwegian is classified as a verb second language (V2). V2 can be seen as a special instance of verb movement, which implies that the finite verb in any declarative clause must be the second element of the clause. This causes the verb to move further up in the hierarchy from I (where it has received its inflectional features) to the head position (C) of the topmost functional projection (CP). I will not discuss movement from I to C in this paper.

outlined in detail for example in Haegeman (1994), Haegeman & Guéron (1999) and Lasnik (2000).

Returning more specifically to the difference between English and Norwegian with respect to verb movement, this would be analysed within the Principle and Parameters framework as Norwegian requiring any finite verb to move from its original VP-internal position to I in order to combine with its relevant functional features. In English, on the other hand, only auxiliaries move to I, while lexical verbs remain *in situ* (Vikner 1995).

Have and be

A structural feature of any auxiliary, be it Norwegian or English, is that it takes a verbal complement. In more traditional literature (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985) one or several auxiliaries and the lexical verb are seen as constituting one complex verb phrase (VP), where the lexical verb is the head of the VP. Within the Principles and Parameters Theory complex verb forms have been viewed differently. The auxiliaries *have* and *be* are each considered to head their own VP, where they take another VP (another auxiliary or the lexical verb) as their complement. Additionally, more specifically related to the Principles and Parameters Theory, auxiliaries are generally regarded as distinct from lexical verbs in that they do not assign theta roles or Case.[7]

Modals

Modals have been viewed as occupying a structural position different from the position occupied by the auxiliaries *have* and *be*. Chomsky (1981) suggests that modals are instances of I, so in a sense he sees modals in opposition to tense, and since modals only have finite forms in English, they are considered to be inserted directly under I. In other words, Chomsky proposes that modality is an alternative to tense, and thus modals cannot be analysed

[7] Note, however, that some linguists consider root modals to assign an external theta role. Confer Eide (2002: 106) for a brief overview.

as VPs. Lasnik (2000) takes a different view. He argues that modals express tense relationships in addition to mood – an argument he partly bases on the examples in (10) and (11) (from Lasnik 2000: 138):
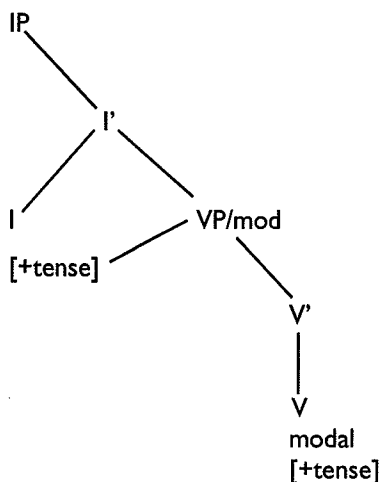
(10)

    a. John *says* he *can* swim.

    b. John *said* he *could* swim.

(11)

    a. John *says* he *is* happy.

    b. John *said* he *was* happy.

In the examples above Lasnik argues that (10) expresses the same time relationship as (11). If modality does not express tense, there is no way of explaining the parallel tense relationship in the two examples, according to Lasnik. It is, however, evident that the picture is less black and white than described above. A present tense lexical verb in the main clause does not automatically result in a present tense modal in the embedded clause. Further, the semantic interpretation of any modal auxiliary is usually predominantly focused on its modality. Still, it is normally assumed that modals in English are inherently tensed, if for no other reason because they can only appear as the first verb in a sequence of verbs. In order to account for this, one could do as suggested by Chomsky (1981) and insert them directly under I. However, I will follow Lasnik (2000) and regard them as heading individual VPs. One way of accounting for their potential temporal reading is to give the tense marking a duality, as illustrated in (12). The modals themselves may be regarded as being inherently tensed, yet this tense is in a sense 'frozen' or 'archaic'. That is to say, English modals are marked as [+tense], but for this to be activated in order to provide a temporal interpretation of the modals, they must also receive 'dynamic' tense from I. When the tense on the modal corresponds with the tense on its surroundings, the temporal reading prevails.

(12)

```
          IP
          /\
         /  \
        /    I'
       /    /\
      /    /  \
     I'   /    VP/mod
   [+tense]      \
                  \
                   V'
                   |
                   |
                   V
                 modal
                [+tense]
```

If we look at Norwegian, we find further support for Lasnik's view that modals originate as heads of VPs. We know that English modals only appear in finite forms, whereas Norwegian modals also have non-finite forms (infinitive and past participle). Additionally, English only allows one modal auxiliary in each clause, whereas modal auxiliaries can co-occur in Norwegian, as the examples below show:

(13)

> a. Du skal kunne temme løver nå.
>
> you shall canINF tame lions now
>
> 'You should be able to tame lions now.'
>
> b. Han burde ville mate tigrene i dag.
>
> he should willINF feed tigers-the to day
>
> 'He should want to feed the tigers today.'

This discrepancy may of course be explained as a result of there only being finite modals in English, and only one finite verb is acceptable in each clause. Additionally, it follows from this that Norwegian modals may follow *have* as participles:

(14)

> a. Du skulle ha kunnet temme løver nå.

you should have canPASTP tame lions now

'You should have been able to tame lions now.'

b. Han burde ha villet mate tigrene i dag

he should have willPASTP feed tigers-the to day

'He should have wanted to feed the tigers today.'

In other words, since Norwegian modals appear in finite and non-finite forms, they cannot appear directly under I since non-finite verb forms are unacceptable in this position.

Phrase-structural representation of auxiliaries
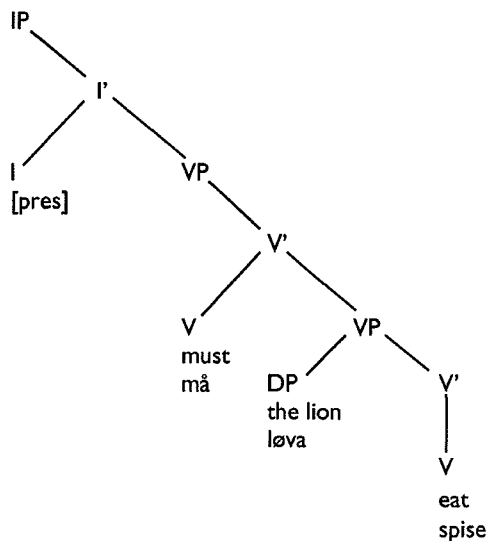
In conformity with the view that modals also originate as heads of VPs, it is possible to present a unified representation of auxiliaries, which applies to both Norwegian and English, as illustrated by the underlying representation in (16), based on the English example in (15a) and its Norwegian equivalent in (15b):

(15)

    a. The lion must eat.

    b. Løva må spise.

(16)

As we can see from the structure above, and as Lasnik (2000) points out, we could say that modals resemble I in that they take a VP as their complement, rather than saying that modals are instances of I.

Aspectual verb forms, such as those in (17) are given a similar treatment by Lasnik:

(17)

    a. The giraffe has escaped.

    b. Sjiraffen har rømt.

Here the participle affix is considered to head its own phrase, which Lasnik calls EnP, and it is the complement of *have*. Thus, the close connection between the auxiliary *have* and the participle can be expressed as a selectional property – *have* selects EnP as its complement. The tree structure in (18) shows the point of departure that eventually results in (17):

(18)
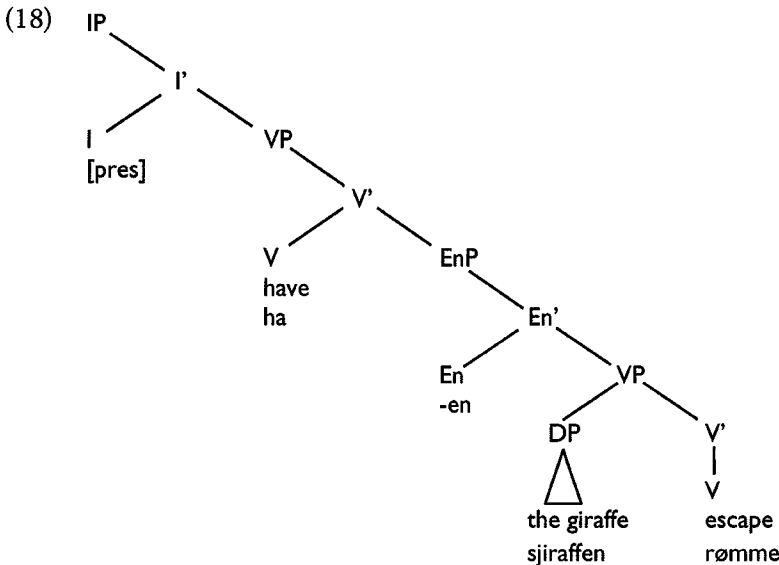
Have amalgamates with [pres] to make the auxiliary finite, yielding *has*, *-en* amalgamates with *escape* yielding *escaped*, and the DP in the specifier position of VP needs to move to [Spec, IP] via [Spec, EnP]

and [Spec, VP] in order to receive Case.[8] Also, if a clause contains several auxiliaries, these are successively stacked up, where each auxiliary takes a new VP as its complement.[9]

Under the analysis presented here, we see that the basic phrase-structural representation of Norwegian and English auxiliaries appears to be identical. Thus, despite the descriptive outline of the auxiliary properties in section 1, we see that it is not the auxiliary representation in the two languages that causes the different patterns. Additionally, this conforms to the assumption that Norwegian as well as English auxiliaries are considered to undergo movement to I in order to receive inflectional properties. However, the picture gets more blurred in connection with negation.

4. The nature of negation

The question of how to represent negation structurally in English and Norwegian raises some interesting issues. Consider the examples below:

(19)

    a. *The clown came not.

    b. *The clown came never.

    c. *The clown not came.

    d. The clown never came.

    e. The clown did not come.

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[8] In the same manner as the past participle heads its own phrase, the progressive form in English heads an *IngP*, and thereby the close relationship between the auxiliary *be* and the progressive is established. *Be* selects an IngP as its complement, parallel to the way *have* selects the EnP. In consistency with this, a similar representation with respect to the infinitive can be suggested for the Norwegian data in (14) repeated below:

Du skulle ha kunnet temme løver nå.

Han burde ha villet mate tigrene i dag.

In these examples the finite auxiliary selects the bare infinitive *ha*, which in turn selects a participle complement. One might suggest that the infinitive heads its own maximal projection InfP, selected by the preceding verb, and that the InfP selects a VP headed by *ha* as its complement. The head of the InfP itself is empty since the infinitive is bare.

[9] I consider EnP and IngP to be some kind of 'verbal' phrases too since they are selected by and thus complements of verbs, and they also select VPs as their complements.

Adverbials such as *never* in (19b) are generally assumed to originate in an adjoined position between the highest VP and IP, as shown in (20):

(20)

```
        IP
          \
           I'
          / \
         I   VP
            /  \
        never    VP
                 |
                 V'
                 |
                 V
```
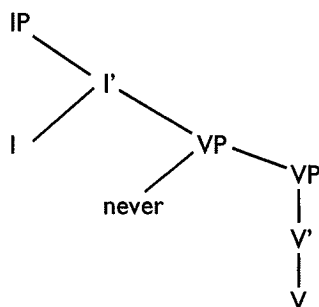
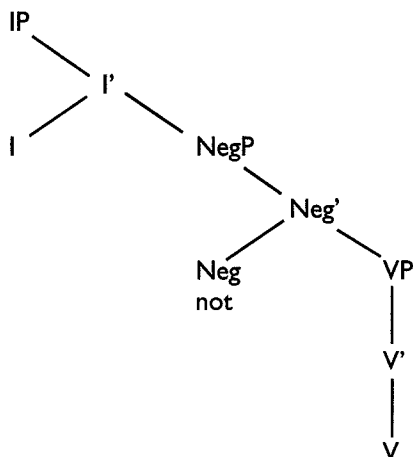If we assume a similar position for *not*, the ungrammaticality of (19a) and (19b) can easily be explained: English lexical verbs never move from their original position; they always remain *in situ*. The verb in (19a) and (19b) has clearly moved further up in the hierarchy than the adjoined adverbial since they appear linearly to the left. However, the examples in (19c) and (19d) are harder to explain from this point of view. Given that the lexical verb must remain in a position lower than the adverbial, both (19c) and (19d) should be grammatically acceptable. However, this is not the case. Only the sentence with the 'proper' adverb *never* in this position is grammatical. On the basis of these observations – the different behaviour of adverbs and *not* – Pollock (1989) suggests that *not* heads its own maximal Negation Projection (NegP) – as the configuration in (21) shows:

(21)

```
        IP
          \
           I'
          /  \
         I    NegP
                \
                 Neg'
                /    \
             Neg      VP
             not      |
                      V'
                      |
                      V
```

Affix Hopping vs. government

In order to explain the relevance of NegP for the account of (19c) and (19d) above, the issue of how the lexical verbs in English sentences receive the tense and agreement features in I must be raised. Lasnik (2000) invokes the notion of *Affix Hopping*, and he takes the same view on this phenomenon as Chomsky (1957) presents. The idea is that the inflectional affix that originates in I must somehow amalgamate with the lexical verb since movement is ruled out – as the data in (19a) and (19b) showed. Affix Hopping implies that the affix in I is lowered down on the lexical verb, yielding the correct form of the verb. According to Lasnik (2000), there must be linear adjacency between I and the verb in V. In (19c) the intervening *not* would block the lowering. From this we would, however, also expect (19d) to be ungrammatical, but this is clearly not the case.

Another, and, in my opinion, more fruitful way of accounting for the amalgamation of the affix and the lexical verb is by means of the notion of *government*. Although Chomsky has dismissed the idea of government, government represents a manner of accounting for this phenomenon that is more in line with the general theoretical assumptions – as downwards movement is normally considered an unfortunate operation. Government involves a hierarchical relationship between I and the lexical verb, where I by means of its higher position, given certain conditions,[10] has the possibility of transferring the abstract inflectional features to the verb. The notion of government accounts in a more theoretically coherent manner for the amalgamation of the I features and the lexical verb in English in the sense that it better captures the abstractness of the process. The amalgamation of I and the lexical verb should not be seen as a literal process, a notion which I think government conveys better. Also, as mentioned above, government does away with downward movement.

Returning to the question as to how (19c) is ungrammatical and (19d) is not, we see that the lexical verb in the former cannot

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[10] A governs a node B iff A m-commands B; no maximal projection intervenes between A and B and A is a head. (Trask 1993: 120)

receive its inflectional features since NegP intervenes between I and the verb, and the verb is thus not governed. (19d) is, however, acceptable because the adverb *never* is adjoined and does not constitute an intervening projection that blocks government. As a result, I governs the verb and can receive its inflectional features.

In Norwegian the situation appears to be slightly different. Consider the examples in (22):

(22)

    a. Klovnen kom ikke.

    clown-the came not

    'The clown did not come.'

    b. Klovnen kom aldri.

    clown-the came never

    'The clown never came.'

Norwegian lexical verbs move from their original position due to the requirement in Norwegian that the finite verb must move from its original VP-internal position. The grammaticality of both the sentences in (22) should indicate that the verb in both cases has undergone movement form V to I. However, there are certain constraints on movement, and once we have investigated those, we will see that (22a) and (22b) may not be entirely parallel structural representations.

Head Movement Constraint

Travis (1984) formulated the *Head Movement Constraint* (HMC) based on the observation that movement of any element cannot skip a position on its way to where it is moving. Therefore, if a position that is a landing site for an element is occupied, movement is ruled out. Although referred to as the Head Movement Constraint,[11] it is

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[11] There are various versions of the HMC. Rizzi (1990) characterizes the constraints on heads and specifiers movement as *Relativized Minimality*. That is to say, if an item is going to move, it has to move to the next appropriate position up. *Minimality* refers to the item

not to say that it only applies to heads. If something moves from specifier position, it has to move to the next specifier position up. If it moves from head position, it moves to the head position immediately to the left, that is further up in the hierarchy.[12]

Returning to the Norwegian data in (22), we see that we meet some difficulties regarding *ikke* in (22). If we assume that *ikke* heads NegP in Norwegian, it is hard to explain why *kom* can move to I and not violate the HMC. Since the head position of NegP is a relevant landing site for the verb, but this position is already filled by *not*, (22a) seems to have violated the HMC. Yet, it is a perfectly acceptable Norwegian sentence. This apparent violation of the HMC can be accounted for simply by assuming that in Norwegian negation is adjoined rather than heading its own maximal projection, and thereby not violating the HMC (Holmberg & Platzack 1995). In other words, negation in Norwegian behaves like an ordinary adverbial and has the representation presented for adverbials in (20).

We can now return to English and the example (19e), here repeated as (23):

(23)

    The clown did not come.

In this example *do*-support has taken place, and on the basis of the discussion above, it is now possible to explain the phenomenon in some more detail: The lexical verb in English cannot move out of its original position. It is a position in which it appears to be sedimented. The

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moving in a minimal way, and it is *relativized* because where the element lands depends on its properties. In other words, if it is a head, it moves up to the next head position; if it is an XP, it moves up to the next XP position. An XP can cross over a head, but not over a specifier. A head can cross over a specifier, but not over a head. In other words, Travis's HMC becomes a special case of Rizzi's Relativized Minimality

[12] Formally, the distinction is made between A-movement and A'-movement: A-movement (argument movement) denotes movement of a constituent from one argument position to another, whereas A'-movement denotes movement to non-argument positions. For example, movement to [Spec, CP] is non-argument movement since elements that are not arguments, e.g. complementizers such as *whether* or *that* or a *wh*-operator, can occupy the position.

presence of negation, represented by NegP, prevents the amalgamation of the features in I with V since V is not governed by I. Thus, as a last resort *do* is inserted directly under I in order to rescue the sentence. The inflectional features thereby amalgamate with *do*, resulting in a grammatical sentence. *Do*-support is an operation that takes place to make sure that the lexical verb receives its inflectional features. This happens in relation to question formation when there is no lexical verb present, as we saw in (3), here repeated as (24):

(24)

    a. *Comes the clown?

    b. Does the clown come?

In interrogative clauses the finite verb moves further up to the front position. Again, the lexical verb is not available for movement, and the structure requires that a verb occupies the initial position. As a last resort *do* is inserted directly under I in order to fulfil the requirements of question formation.[13]

5. English auxiliaries and the Head Movement Constraint

One issue that has not been addressed so far is the role of the HMC in relation to auxiliaries. Given the approach taken in this paper with regards to structural representation of auxiliaries, we have not yet been able to account for the grammaticality of a negated sentence containing an auxiliary. In the discussion so far we have concluded that the HMC blocks movement past NegP. Yet, sentences such as (25) are grammatically acceptable, and here it is the auxiliary that appears to have moved.

(25)

    a. The elephant has not performed yet.

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[13] Note that the verb ultimately moves to C in question formation.

b. The tiger could not become a star.

Based on our previous assumptions, the auxiliaries have clearly moved past NegP, which is an obvious violation of the HMC. The sentences in (25) are nevertheless grammatical. To this problem there does not seem to exist a simple explanation.

One view of this issue involves the notion of *excorporation* (Roberts 1991). Excorporation is "…an operation in which a head which is adjoined to another head, is detached from the head to which it is adjoined, and moved elsewhere" (Radford 1997: 506). The general idea is that the auxiliaries in (25) have moved stepwise to I via Neg, and the auxiliary and the negation have somehow amalgamated. Then this amalgamated element has moved further up in the hierarchy to receive its inflectional features. In those cases where *not* does not undergo cliticization, one might suggest that only the auxiliary moves to I – after having landed in Neg. That English has distinct negative forms of auxiliaries (one of the NICE properties) indicates that this might be a way of accounting for this phenomenon.[14]

Another explanation that in some respects better accounts for this is based on an idea put forward in e.g. Pollock (1989) in relation to the discussion of NegP, namely that the negation is in the specifier of NegP rather than in the head position. If that is the case, the head position is available as a landing site for the auxiliary, and no breach of the HMC occurs when the auxiliary moves, and since the auxiliary will not be governed by I because of the intervening NegP, the auxiliary is forced to move in order to receive its inflectional features. The analysis of *do*-support also fits in with this picture. When no auxiliary is present, the lexical verb cannot receive its inflectional features in the base position because the government relation is blocked by NegP. Thus, the last resort for the clause to make it grammatically acceptable is *do*-insertion.

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[14] Rizzi (1990) argues in the spirit of Pollock (1989) that NegP does not represent a relevant intervention when it comes to movement from V and I. This represents Relativized Minimality wherein locality plays an important role and NegP appears to be irrelevant within the local domain in question.

6. Conclusion

In this paper I have attempted to show that the auxiliary systems in Norwegian and English appear as identical in most respects. This implies that much of the diversion often related to the distributional pattern of Norwegian and English auxiliaries is caused by other syntactic factors associated with auxiliary representation. There seem to be three factors that are particularly influential in accounting for the differences in the auxiliary representation. First, the parametric variation in Norwegian and English with respect to verb movement is significant. That Norwegian requires all finite verbs to move has impact on the behaviour of auxiliaries in Norwegian. Second, the inert nature of English lexical verbs makes the picture even more complex. Last, the different nature of negation in the two languages also affects the auxiliary distribution. That negation is considered to be a constituent of a functional projection in English, whereas it is analysed as being in an adjoined position in Norwegian, plays an important part in the syntactic makeup of the sentence. However, once these factors have been identified, it is possible to outline a basic architecture for auxiliaries that is applicable for both Norwegian and English, first and foremost by regarding auxiliaries (both primary and modal) in both languages as heading a distinct VP. Further support for this idea comes from the similar processes that act in connection with *do*-support. In other words, once the architecture is decided upon, the auxiliaries in their own capacity have shown literally identical behaviour.

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Reading *The Merchant of Venice* Dialogically

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Seen through the eyes of contemporary Shakespeare criticism, three - perhaps four - of Shakespeare's plays stand out as ideologically problematic or 'politically incorrect': The *Merchant of Venice, Othello, The Tempest* - and perhaps *The Taming of the Shrew*. The specific ways in which these plays address, or are seen to address, issues of anti-Semitism, race, colonialism, and gender respectively, have elicited a wide range of politically charged responses, both in criticism and performance. None perhaps more so than *The Merchant of Venice*. The play's dominant action of castigation and forced conversion of Shylock the Jew will inescapably jar post-Holocaust sensibilities to such an extent that critical responses almost inevitably find themselves bogged down in negotiating strategies of dismissal or apology, or both. One of the most recent, and most sophisticated instances of such a negotiation is found in Harold Bloom's chapter on *The Merchant of Venice* in *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (1999). The initial and provocative point made by Bloom is this:

> One would be blind, deaf and dumb not to recognize that Shakespeare's grand, equivocal comedy *The Merchant of Venice* is nevertheless a profoundly anti-Semitic work (p171)

Of course, this remarkably explicit ethical stance towards Shakespeare clearly contradicts Bloom's stated intentions in the introduction to this same book, where he polemicizes what he calls elsewhere "The School of Resentment" or "French Shakespeare":

> Though professional resenters insist that the aesthetic stance is itself an ideology, I scarcely agree, and I bring nothing but the aesthetic (in Walter Pater's and Oscar

> Wilde's language) to Shakespeare in this book. Or
> rather, he brings it to me, since Shakespeare educated
> Pater, Wilde, and the rest of us in the aesthetic, which,
> as Pater observed, is an affair of perceptions and
> sensations. Shakespeare teaches us how and what to
> perceive, and he also instructs us how and what to sense
> and then to experience as sensation. Seeking as he did to
> enlarge us, not as citizens or as Christians, but as
> consciousnesses, Shakespeare outdid all his preceptors as
> an entertainer. Our resenters, who can be described (
> without malice) as gender-and power-freaks, are not
> much moved by the plays as entertainment. (9-10)

Bloom does not explicitly acknowledge this contradiction between
his "aesthetic" ideology and his profound ethical concern about
Shylock, strongly coloured by his own personal stake in "the Jewish
question". Bloom's notion of Shakespeare's effect on his audience, "
not as citizens or as Christians but as consciousnesses" fails to
confront the problem that no consciousness exists in the abstract,
without some specific preconditions and subject matter from which
consciousness springs and with which consciousness is concerned -
and Bloom's own puzzlement in the face of the conflict between the
aesthetic and ethical issues of *The Merchant of Venice*, textually and
contextually, bears ample witness in this regard. Michael Bristol,
referring to a *Paris Review* interview with Bloom, makes a similar point:

> Bloom has in fact argued that an honest production of this
> play, one that faithfully transmits the work's original
> intentions, would be unbearable and intolerable in a post-
> Holocaust context. Here it is abundantly clear that Bloom
> speaks as a concrete situated subject, a Jewish son of
> immigrant parents who still remembers fighting street
> battles to defend himself against persecution by Irish gangs
> in the Bronx during the 1930s [...]
>
> Bloom acknowledges the crucial point that has been
> made over and over again by the 'resenters', namely that

literary works are always received against the resistances
and the grievances of their actual but unforeseen
addressees. Criticism really is 'agonistic'... (Bristol:137)

In the following I propose a dialogic reading of *The Merchant of
Venice* which attempts to steer clear of two types of monological
readings: on the one hand the Scylla of Harold Bloom's ethically
motivated ' bafflement', and on the other hand, the Charybdis of
the reductiveness of what Bloom – without malice, or so he says, –
refers to as the school of 'gender- and power freaks', or 'resenters'.

The opening scene, always crucial in Shakespeare in terms of
setting of mood and themes, is not at all about Shylock. It is
Antonio, the 'merchant of Venice', who speaks:

In sooth, I know not why I am so sad,
It wearies me, you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn:
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.
(I,1,lines1-7)

To explain Antonio's sadness as stemming from his worries about
his financial vulnerability would make little sense in the context of
the play as a whole. There is no discussion in the play about the
soundness of Antonio's dispositions (if we leave out the general
issue of payment of interest, or usury), no warnings against putting
all one's eggs in one basket, and the miraculous return of all of
Antonio's ships in Act V is just mentioned in passing. To argue that
Antonio is sad because Bassanio is getting married draws on what
has become more or less conventional, the reading of the
relationship between Antonio and Bassanio as homoerotic. There is
much to be said for a reading along those lines, with all the mental
reservations as to the peculiarities of Elizabethan conceptions of
love, but, dramatically speaking, Antonio has not been told about
Bassanio's suit for Portia, when he makes his opening speech about

his sadness, only about a "lady" and a "secret pilgrimage" (I,1,lines119-20) - and, going by Bassanio's description of the project, it is not primarily a love project, but "plots and purposes how to get clear of all the debts I owe"(I,1,lines133-34). Indeed, according to Bassanio's description of the project, this is not the first time that he has sought Antonio's financial assistance in projects like this. The only real clues to the mystery of Antonio's sadness are found in Antonio's two statements about himself: the most quoted one is from the trial scene, and in response to Bassanio's attempt to cheer him up:

> *Antonio* I am a tainted wether of the flock,
> Meetest for death, - the weakest kind of fruit
> Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me;
> You cannot better be employ'd Bassanio,
> Than to live still and write mine epitaph."
> (IV,1, lines111-118)

The Old Testament image of the 'tainted wether' resonates with connotations of the barrenness of the sexual outsider, and with the sacrificial function of the scapegoat, just as the less striking image of the 'weakest fruit' indicates vulnerability to worms or disease.The second clue, and perhaps one just as important, lies in Antonio's response to Gratiano in the opening scene of the play:

> *Antonio* I hold the world but as the world Gratiano,
> A stage, where every man must play a part,
> And mine a sad one.
> *Gratiano* Let me play the fool,
> With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
> And let my liver rather heat with wine
> Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
> (Act I, sc.1., lines76-82)

The notion of ' teatrum mundi', or the world as a stage, was a commonplace one, and one which is echoed throughout Shakespeare's plays. But how does one make dramatic sense of Antonio's grandiose stage metaphor, or indeed Gratiano's

response, so early in the play? John Drakakis' discussion of Antonio's sadness in "Historical Difference and Venetian Patriarchy" (Drakakis:200-03) identifies Antonio's inability to understand himself: " And such a want-wit sadness makes of me/That I have much ado to know myself"(I,1,lines 6-7), but, while recognising the persuasive arguments for a homosexual or homosocial reading made by W.H. Auden ((Auden 1963) and Leslie Fiedler (Fiedler1972), Drakakis steers admirably clear of them as an exhaustive *explanation* of that sadness. Instead, Drakakis draws on the Marxist notion of alienation:

> [...] commercial activity is never quite represented in the play as itself, and is forced to repress, not homosexual desire, but the reality of its own operations in the world. The result is precisely that 'alienation' or loss of identity which Marx identifies in the 'Christian state' which has yet to become fully secularised [...] From the outset, therefore, Antonio's 'sadness', and the lack of his self-knowledge are, to a very considerable extent, the *subject* of *The Merchant of Venice,* although the play cannot speak its concerns directly except in terms of an intolerant, deeply nationalistic fear." (Drakakis:202-03)

Why is it that this magisterial *Ideologiekritik* is less than satisfactory? Is it perhaps because of its linguistic insistence on the elision of human agency? "...commercial activity...is forced to repress... the reality of its own operations"; "...the play cannot speak its concerns directly..." And is it not because this elision of human agency is indicative of a particular kind of critical blindness? There is after all no such thing in the play as commercial activity in the abstract, but human beings doing business with other human beings within the confines of the Venetian commercial system. If 'alienation', and consequent sadness, is a systemic function of 'The Christian state not yet fully secularised', why are not *all* the Christians in Venice sad? Could it be that the reason why Drakakis feels that 'the play cannot speak its concerns directly' is that *players* speak, not the play, and while people may have concerns, the play does not. In other,

and Bakhtinian words: the play should not be seen as expressive of a particular (monologic) set of concerns, not even ultimately or 'in the last instance', but as a set of dialogic transactions - a polyglossia of discourses interacting within the broad generic framework of comedy. Shakespeare may of course have had his concerns, but I suggest that Shakespeare's *primary* concern as a playwright was to create a dramatic dynamic out of a rich material of themes, conflicts and oppositions drawing not just on existing literary sources, but on received notions of the concepts of Venice, Jewry, usury, etc, and the genre of romantic comedy. It is in this context that the sadness of Antonio should be seen - as a position within the play which may be open to psychologising notions of repressed homosexuality, or sociologising notions of the displacement of real economic necessities, but whose primary *meaning* is the dramatic one within the play - the function of what one might term *melancholy relief.* Again the term relief should be understood not primarily as an affective function - of the audience being temporarily relieved of of the dominant comic appeal of the play, but in the sculptural sense of the term, of throwing into relief. Just as Shakespeare perceived a dramatic need for the melancholy relief of a Don John in *Much Ado*, or Jacques in As *You Like It*, there is in *The Merchant of Venice* a structural need for a passive, melancholy counterpoint to the youthful energies of the young males of Venice, to be redeemed by the female resourcefulness of a Portia, whose financial clout is not based on risky venture capitalism, but on stable, inherited wealth. This "functional" reading of Antonio and his sadness is signposted, I suggest, by Antonio's quasi-metatheatrical remark quoted above (" I hold the world but as the world Gratiano/A stage where every man must play a part/ And mine a sad one".), and of course supported by Gratiano's rejoinder ("Let me play the fool...."). Indeed, within the Renaissance understanding of the balance of humours within the human body, there was no need to *explain* melancholy. Melancholy was simply understood as the effect of an imbalance in the relative proportions of blood, phlegm, green bile and black bile within the body, the melancholy person having an excess of black bile. Which is to say that in terms of the conditions of intelligibility that

obtained at the time of the production of the play, neither the playwright nor the audience would have felt the need to look beyond Antonio's own explanation in Act I, sc.1 : the world is a stage where every man must play a part, and his is a sad one. Antonio's sad part in the play is a parallel one to Portia's dead father: Portia's father is the originator of her wealth, and has determined the conditions under which his daughter is to be married; Antonio, by the same token, provides Bassanio with the money necessary to propose to Portia in the proper fashion, and the conditions of the loan agreed to between Shylock and Antonio are to play a central role in the relationship between Portia and Bassanio. Structural counterpoint is a recurrent feature in Shakespeare's comedies and the dialogic negotiations of divergent or opposed discourses are the basic ingredients of Shakespeare's comedic universes, and in *The Merchant of Venice* the male-dominated world of Venice is set against the female world of Belmont. It is however, important to note that a central clue to the problematic nature of the play is to do not with Belmont and Venice as a binary or dialectic relation, but rather with the *dialogic* nature of that relation. Belmont and Venice are already related *before* the beginning of the play: Bassanio's first conversation with Antonio follows up on a previous discussion:

> *Ant.* Well, tell me now what lady is the same
> To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage -
> That you to-day promis'd to tell me of?
> (Act I, sc.1, lines 119-121)

Similarly, the first presentation of Belmont clearly spells out Portia's coyness in pretending not to have a clear pre-play memory of Bassanio, at the end of the expository catalogue of lovers (Act I, sc.2, lines 108-115). The last lines of that scene form an ironic thematic bridge to the next one:

> Come Nerissa, sirrah go before:
> Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another
> knocks at the door
> (Act I,sc 2, lines 126-27)

There is indeed another wooer knocking at another door, but it is Bassanio, in the following scene, who is 'wooing' Shylock for the sum of three thousand ducats:

> Enter Bassanio with Shylock the Jew.
> *Shy.* Three Thousand ducats, well.
> *Bass.* Ay, sir, for three months.
> *Shy.* For three months, well.
> *Bass.* For the which as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.
> *Shy.* Antonio shall become bound, well.
> (Act I, sc.3, lines 1-5)

Shylock's verbal 'entrance' is among the most spectacular in all of Shakespeare's plays, comparable perhaps only to Hamlet's in Act I, sc. 2 : "A little more than kin and less than kind... ". From his very first line, Shylock, like Hamlet, imposes himself on the drama, dominating the exchange with Bassanio in an idiom of calculated repetitions and "well's" which is as individualised as Hamlet's. The resonance of Shylock's "well's" is strikingly paralleled in Bakhtin's/Voloshinov's conversation analysis of the single word "well".[1]

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[1] "Two people are sitting in a room. They are both silent. Then one of them says, "Well!". The other does not respond..

For us, as outsiders, this entire "conversation" is utterly incomprehensible. Taken in isolation, the utterance "Well!" is empty and unintelligible. Nevertheless, this peculiar colloquy of two persons, consisting of only one -although, to be sure, one expressively intoned - word [...]does make perfect sense, is fully meaningful and complete.

In order to disclose the sense and meaning of this colloquy, we must analyse it. But what is it exactly that we can subject to analysis? Whatever pains we take with the purely verbal part of the utterance, however subtly we define the phonetic, morphological, and semantic factors of the word *well*, we shall still not come a single step closer to an understanding of the whole sense of the colloquy.[...]

What is it we lack, then? We lack the "extraverbal context" that made the word well a meaningful locution for the listener.

This extraverbal context of the utterance is comprised of three factors:(1) *the common spatial purview* of the interlocutors (the unity of the visible - in this case, the room, a window, and so on, (2) the interlocutors' *common knowledge and understanding of the situation*, and (3) their *common evaluation* of the situation.

At the time the colloquy took place, both inerlocutors *looked up* at the window, and *saw* that it had begun to snow; *both knew* that it was already May and that it was high time for spring to come; finally, *both* were *sick and tired* of the protracted winter - *they were both*

Michael Skovmand

Harold Bloom's characterization of The Merchant of Venice as " a profoundly anti-Semitic play" may be highly problematic, but what is beyond debate is that Shylock from his very first words is cast as a villain. Shylock's 'well's and repetition of Bassanio's phrases ("Bass.: Ay sir, for three months/ Shy.: For three months, well... " etc), his smug assessment of Antonio's credit rating ("...ships are but boards, sailors but men, there be land-rats, and water-rats...") and his aggressive rejection of dinner with Bassanio and Antonio ("I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you and so following: but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you...."), all of this signals a seething resentment that is rooted in a posited *prior extradramatic context,* anchored in contemporary presuppositions, but fleshed out through the specific inflections provided by Shakespeare. This is exacerbated by Antonio's entrance. Shylock's *aside* is unmitigated venom:

> *Shylock [Aside]* How like a fawning publican he looks!
> I hate him for he is a Christian:
> But more, for that in low simplicity
> He lends out money gratis, and brings down
> The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
> If I can catch him once upon the hip,
> I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
> (I, 3, lines 36-42)

The confrontation between Antonio and Shylock is dialogic in the Bakhtinian sense : two competing discourses, set within a context of unspecified past antagonisms. The venom of Shylock is matched by the laid-back arrogance of Antonio, who, however, is in the unenviable and vulnerable position not only of having to stoop to borrowing money from his enemy, but to compromise on his principled aversion to interest-taking. Antonio's opening line in this

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looking forward to spring and *both were bitterly disappointed* by the late snowfall. On this "jointly seen" (snowflakes outside the window), "jointly known" (the time of the year - May), and "unanimously evaluated"(winter wearied of, spring looked forward to) - on all this the utterance *directly depends*, all this is seized in its actual, living import- in its very sustenance." (Holquist 1990:62-63)

confrontation is indicative of this complex power game taking place between the two characters – it is designed to put Shylock in his place :

> *Ant.* Shylock, albeit I neither lend or borrow
> By taking nor by giving of excess,
> Yet to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
> I'll break a custom...
> (Act I, sc. 3, lines56-59)

Shylock, savouring the vulnerability of his old enemy, is not prepared to let Antonio off the hook so easily. In his highly personalised idiom of hesitation, repetition, and feigned attempts at recollecting things that are crystal-clear in his mind, he is extracting the maximum of pleasure from Antonio's discomfort:

> [...] Well then, your bond, and let me see, - but hear you,
> Me thoughts you said, you neither lend nor borrow
> Upon advantage.
> *Ant.* I do never use it.
> *Shy.* When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep...etc
> (Act I, sc.3, lines63-66)

Shylock begins a leisurely and rambling Old Testament analogy which, ostensibly makes a point about breeding and thrift as time-honoured Biblical qualities, linking these concepts to that of 'interest'. The primary - dialogic- function of Shylock's speech is not, however, in its semantic content. It is, rather, in its act of appropriating the right to speak, indeed to preach at Antonio. As Bakhtin puts it,

> Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and
> easily into the private property of the speaker's
> intentions; it is populated – overpopulated – with the
> intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to
> submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult
> and complicated process (Holquist 1981:294)

The simmering mutual aggression and resentment make for a dialogue between Antonio and Shylock - with Bassanio refereeing

the contest - which is constantly on the verge of running off the rails, with bad faith on both sides, and with both parties constantly grasping every opportunity to get at the other person's sensibilities, or throat. Shylock's choice of an Old Testament analogy - a text shared by Jews and Christians - to make his case for the taking of interest, predictably incenses Antonio ("The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose..."), and Antonio's attempt to close the deal ("Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?") affords Shylock yet another opportunity to push the advantage of his situation:

> ...You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
> And spet upon my Jewish gabardine,
> And all for use of that which is mine own.
> [...] What should I say to you? Should I not say
> "Hath a dog money? Is it possible
> A cur can lend three thousand ducats?...
> (Act I, sc.3, lines 106-08; lines 115-17)

Language, in this dramatic confrontation between Shylock and Antonio, is indeed a contested space, not just in terms of appropriating the right to speak, but also semantically, in the process of naming. The phenomenon at the core of this dispute - borrowing money at interest, is constantly re-named: Antonio: "I neither lend nor borrow/ By taking nor by giving of *excess*";"Shylock: "You neither lend nor borrow/Upon *advantage*"; Antonio: "And what of him? [Jacob] did he take *interest*?"Shylock: "In the Rialto you have rated me/ About my moneys and my *usances*;"Antonio: "...when did friendship take/A *breed for barren metal* of his friend?"

The semantic quibbling continues, now focusing on the terms 'kind' and 'kindness':

> *Shy.* ... This is kind I offer.
> *Bass.* This were kindness.
> *Shy.* This kindness I will show...
> (Act I, sc. 3, lines 138-39)

Whereupon Shylock explains the conditions attached to the loan, 'the merry bond' of a pound of flesh. J.L. Halio (Halio 1993)

suggests that Shylock's use of 'kind' in "this is kind I offer" is unidiomatic, reflecting his status as an alien. John Russell Brown (Arden edition of MV) points to the double meaning of 'kind' as 'generous' and 'natural'. I would add, against Halio, and supplementing Brown, that Shylock's use of 'kind' makes a third kind of sense: as "payment in kind", i.e. payment not in money but "in goods or natural produce" (COD). This makes all the more sense, since it connects logically with the preceding lines, in which Shylock, masterfully, calms down Antonio, who, after Shylock's "You call'd me a dog " - speech, has risen to the bait, and stormed: "I am as like to call thee so again/To spet on thee again, to spurn thee too."

Shylock, playing Antonio like a yo-yo, now calms Antonio down, as he would a child:

> *Shy.* Why look you how you storm!
> I would be friends with you, and have your love,
> Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
> Supply your present wants, and take no doit
> Of usances for my moneys, and you'll not hear me, -
> *This is kind I offer.* [My italics]
> (Act I, sc.3, lines133-38)

The word 'kind' is interpreted by Bassanio as 'generosity', but Shylock immediately picks up the word 'kindness' and imposes his definition on it: "*This kindness I will show you*" - and it is indeed payment 'in kind' that he is referring to - the pound of flesh. There may be even a further semantic layer involved: Shylock has just made the first of his two 'identity' speeches ("Hath a dog money?"(to be followed up in III, 1 by "I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes?")) The 'merry bond' may indeed signify that, however much he may be treated as a dog, he and Antonio are 'of a kind', belonging to the same species. Shylock's offer can thus be seen as a parodic version of Antonio's feudal notions of the taking of interest as being dishonourable among peers. Contrary to his earlier Old Testament analogy of interest as 'breeding', Shylock now suggests the opposite: interest as physical reduction- the carving out of human flesh.

Shylock clearly reiterates Antonio's terms ' friendship' ("... when did friendship take a breed for barren metal of his friend?") in his phrase: " I extend this friendship,/ If he will take it, so - if not, adieu." And there is in fact a surprisingly quick inversion at the end of this act, when Antonio seems to be won over by Shylock's baited offer, or at least mollified, echoing Shylock's declension of kind/kindness: ("... there is much kindness in the Jew" ; "... The Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind.") It is now Bassanio, up until this point broker and mediator of the deal, who has second thoughts: "I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind."

The dynamics of this crucial scene between Shylock and Antonio, accordingly, hinge on two semantic negotiations: on the one hand, the idea of a concept, or a signified - the payment of interest - expressed through a whole range of shifting signifiers. On the other hand, the presence of one - compound - signifier: kind/kindness, which is given a whole range of semantic inflections. But these dynamics do not simply co-exist, they relate to one another dialogically. Language is "over-populated with the intentions of others", always pre-empting or anticipating future answers. And "utterance" in Act I, scene 3 in *The Merchant of Venice* is dialogic in a very overt sense, in that the two main characters continuously negotiate, or struggle, both semantically and in terms of what contemporary linguistics would call "turn-taking". The scene could almost be said to be dialogically overdetermined, in the sense that it is quite literally a negotiation over the conditions of a loan, with all the ideological implications involved in Venetian/ and by extension, Elizabethan borrowing and lending in the 1590s.

What Bakhtin calls the "internal dialogization" of discourse, in which the speaker echoes or imitates or redefines the phrases of others may take many forms, but these forms are always oriented towards an answer, in anticipation or rebuttal or negotiation or approval. In the scene between Shylock and Antonio this "answerability" of utterance is primarily between the two characters - although wider contexts of social, cultural and religious implications resonate throughout.

Two scenes further on in the play, we come across an instance of 'internal dialogization' contained within the utterance of not two characters, but one, in the form of the first soliloquy of *The Merchant of Venice*, interestingly not given by a major character in the play, but by Launcelet Gobbo, the Clown, a farcical character in the employ of Shylock. The leaving of an empty stage to a minor, and static, low-life character contains in itself a parodic element, foregrounding as it does the incongruity of a minor character in a dramatically major function.[2] This soliloquy marks an abrupt change of address from the previous scene, in which the Prince of Morocco fails Portia's test at Belmont. Morocco's closing couplet: "- Good fortune then, / To make me blest or cursèd among men" - rhymed blank verse, marks a level of formality, against which Lancelot Gobbo's babbling prose is a dramatic drop, an effect of *bathos* or 'sinking'. Furthermore, the audience experiences a sudden switch of *direction*. From *overhearing* conversation between characters on stage, the audience is suddenly addressed directly, and are being taken into the confidence of Gobbo. This is the mode of address Shakespeare's audience of the 1590s, many of which first generation urbanites, would be familiar with from earlier popular theatricals of streets and courtyards, morality plays in particular. And not only is the form of address reminiscent of the morality play, this is also true of Lancelot Gobbo's subject matter and rhetoric. Gobbo parodically casts himself in the role of Everyman, caught in the middle between the tempting 'fiend' and his conscience. His dilemma, parodically, is not a major moral issue, but the more mundane one whether to stay in the service of Shylock or not, and, again in a parodic inversion of the morality tradition, Gobbo opts for the advice of the fiend, and chooses to leave Shylock. Gobbo's language is another indication of the 'heteroglossia' of the scene. His 'malapropisms' mimic the posturing of an uneducated man trying desperately to master the complexities of a language beyond his

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[2] Among the few examples are Lance - and his dog - in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act 4, sc.4; Bottom the Weaver in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act 2, sc.1 ("Bottom's Dream"), and perhaps Pompey in *Measure for Measure*, Act 4, sc. 3, although the last example is little more than a catalogue of prison inmates.

reach. Historically speaking, the ambiguity of Launcelot Gobbo - "the clown", as it says in the stage direction - is the ambiguity of a theatrical stereotype in transition: the clown or fool of popular late medieval theatre developing into the fast-talking, street-smart domestic of city comedy and (much later) Sam Weller fame in Dickens. Indeed, as Launcelot Gobbo's morality soliloquy segues into the next situation, with the arrival of Old Gobbo, Launcelot's father, modern audience sympathies are likely to be tested to the full. Launcelot's father is old and blind, arriving with a dish of doves for his son's master, from the slow, deferential world of a rural subsistence economy, totally out of place in the ironic, commercialised universe of Venice, in which loyalties are as ephemeral as the fortunes of vessels at sea:

> *Launcelot [Aside]* O heavens! This is my true-begotten
> father, who being more than sand-blind, high gravel-
> blind, knows me not, - I will try confusions with him.
> (Act II, sc.2, lines 33-35)

One may wonder just how funny it will have appeared to an Elizabethan audience to watch an old, blind man, lost in the city, being played tricks on by his own son. The cruelty exhibited in the taunting of this old man could be seen to prefigure an equally gratuitous exhibition of cruelty towards another old man - Shylock, who is not only deprived of his livelihood - his money - but is forced to convert to Christianity. In fact, the 'unpleasantness' of *The Merchant of Venice* is nowhere stronger than in the trial scene, in which the entire Venetian establishment are openly ranked against Shylock, whose only protection is the impartiality of the City Charter. As gratuitously cruel as Launcelot to his father is Gratiano, constantly jeering and sneering. As Harold Bloom puts it," [his] anti-Semitic vulgarity reminds me of Julius Streicher; Hitler's favorite newspaper editor." Bloom continues:

> The last two centuries of stage tradition have made
> Shylock a hero-villain, but the text cannot sustain such an
> interpretation. Since Shylock is a murderous villain, then
> Gratiano, though a touch crude, must be taken as a good

> fellow, cheerful and robust in his anti-Semitism, a kind of
> Pat Buchanan of Renaissance Venice. (Bloom:173)

Bloom is right in pointing out that the text does not support an interpretation of Shylock as a hero-villain. But he is wrong in drawing the conclusion that this *eo ipso* means that we should read Gratiano as a 'good fellow'. In fact, Bloom himself provides part of the argument against his own 'monologic' reading of the play in some of his closing comments on the play, with reference to A.P. Rossiter's justly famous *Angel with Horns* from 1961:

> "A.P. Rossiter [...] said that ambivalence was peculiarly the dialectic of Shakespeare's history plays, defining Shakespearean ambivalence as one mode of irony or another. Irony is indeed so pervasive in Shakespeare, in every genre, that no comprehensive account of it is possible. What in *The Merchant of Venice* is not ironical, including the Belmont celebration of Act V?" (Bloom:190)

Indeed, and why should Gratiano be exempt from this pervasive irony? Consequently, whereas the trial scene of Act IV may be the dramatic culmination of the play, running the full gamut of legalistic argument, political consideration, appeals to mercy and sheer vindictiveness, and leaving the audience with all the uncertainties of response voiced by Harold Bloom and others, it is in our interpretation of Act V that we ultimately need to make up our minds as to what *kind* of play *The Merchant of Venice* is. A.D. Nuttall, in his analysis of *The Merchant of Venice* from 1983 (Nuttall: 88) makes an interesting distinction between 'transparent' and 'opaque' critics: on the one hand critics whose desire is to disambiguate or monologise Shakespeare, on the other hand critics who are concerned with the dissonances and ambiguities in Shakespeare's plays. The first school of critics will be looking for closure in Act V of *The Merchant of Venice*: John Russell Brown, whose performance-oriented approach sees the two themes of love and money reconciled in Act V, in the celebration of 'love's wealth' (Russell Brown: 174), or C.L. Barber in his *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*, whose broader socio-cultural approach brings him to identify Act V as the joyful reestablishment of social harmony. As Barber puts it,

No other comedy, until the late romances, ends with so
full an expression of harmony as that which we get in
the opening of the final scene of *The Merchant of Venice*.
And no other final scene is so completely without irony
about the joys it celebrates.[3]

A more 'opaque' reading of the last act of *The Merchant of Venice* is
provided by Catherine Belsey in her essay 'Love in Venice' (Belsey
1998). Act V - one continuous scene - functions as both resolution
and epilogue to the play. The act opens with the famous "In Such a
Night" exchange between Lorenzo and Jessica :

> *Lor.* The moon shines bright. In such a night as this
> When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
> And they did make no noise, in such a night
> Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls
> And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents
> Where Cressid lay that night.
> *Jes.* In such a night
> Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
> And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
> and ran dismayed away.
> *Lor.* In such a night …etc
> (Act V, sc.1, lines1-11)

In her analysis of the opening tete-a-tete between Lorenzo and
Jessica, Belsey notes elements which appear incongruous in what is
supposedly an unqualified celebration of the joy of love. The stories
of Troilus and Cressida, Pyramus and Thisbe, Dido and Aeneas, and
Medea are love stories, but they are stories of betrayal, desertion and
death. The beautifully cadenced shared lines of Lorenzo and Jessica
create a subtly discordant effect with the classical references to
unhappy stories of love. Belsey interprets this element of discord as a

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[3]C.L. Barber, Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and its Relation
to Social Custom (Princeton, NJ, 1959), p.187. I owe this reference to Catherine Belsey,
'Love in Venice', in The Merchant of Venice - Contemporary Critical Essays, ed. by
Martin Coyle (Macmillan 1998), p.140.

conflict in the text between an older view of love as 'anarchic, destructive and dangerous' (p.141) and a domesticated view of love as 'marriage, concord, consent and partnership':

> ...the older understanding of love leaves traces in the
> text, with the effect that desire is only imperfectly
> domesticated, and in consequence the extent to which
> Venice is superimposed upon Belmont becomes visible
> to the audience (p.141)

Belsey then moves on to broader and well-argued considerations of 'desire', 'riddles' and 'love vs friendship' in Act V, emphasising the multiplicity rather than the indeterminacy of such elements. However, Belsey's reading of the Lorenzo-Jessica exchange, imposing as it does broad structural allegory on this passage, misses the way it is anchored to the two characters in question, and the significance of this anchorage. A more detailed textual analysis may illuminate this:

> Shakespeare can be seen to have created subtle directions
> of diction in the 'take-overs' ('antilabe' is the technical
> term) between the two characters: the first two 'take-overs'
> are perfect pentameters : "Where Cressid lay that night/In
> such a night"; "And ran dismayed away/In such a night".
> The next two increase the tempo and intensity by
> overlapping by one beat:"To come again to Car(thage)/In
> such a night"; "That did renew old Ae(son)/In such a
> night". The two last take-overs, however, turn towards
> their personal relationship, and all of a sudden the opposite
> effect is introduced: the lack of a beat - the significant
> pause: "As far as Belmont (-)/ In such a night"; "And ne'er
> a true one (-)/ In such a night" - after which Jessica waxes
> meta-poetical, expressing her impatience with the
> repetitive 'night' motif, and including, perhaps, some
> sexual innuendo: " I would out-night you did nobody
> come..." - an indication of the playful tit for tat nature of
> their exchanges. J. L. Halio's reading of this scene, while
> more concrete than Belsey's, psychologizes the exchange:

> ...the allusions may seem inappropriate in the mouths of
> these newly-weds, even as they tease one another, joking
> half-nervously, perhaps, about love's transience...
> (Halio:137-38)

Halio makes further reference to what he calls 'dark undercurrents'
in lyrical scenes in Shakespeare, e.g. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I,
1, lines 168-79. However, Lysander's unfazed response contradicts
Halio's theory of dark undercurrents in lyrical scenes in Shakespeare.
Lysander does not take Hermia's 'dark' references seriously, because
they are not *meant* to be taken seriously, either by him or by the
audience. Rather, they are to be read as meta-poetical playfulness, an
anti-Petrarchan swipe at courtly posturing. In addition, this tongue-
in-cheek, yet serious response is a way of asserting the independence
of mind of the female character, a signalling of anti-submissiveness
which adds interest and grit to the love relationship.

These points can be applied to the Lorenzo/Jessica exchange in
The Merchant of Venice, but with a couple of differences: Lorenzo
and Jessica are not major characters in the play - consequently there
is little or no focus on nuances and developments in their
relationship. They are, rather, dramatic functions that mirror or
contrast themes or conflicts driven by the major characters. Add to
this the fact that that their exchange is placed as an opening mood
setter in the final act of the play - the 'coda', to use Belsey's musical
analogy, and the significance of this interchange becomes more
apparent. As a bridge to the previous scene in Act IV it continues
the mood of erotic bantering and functions as a prequel in 'minor'
to the 'major' romantic resolution of the play. Indeed, the musical
theme is literalized as the resident musicians of Portia's aristocratic
household are brought outside for some night music to welcome the
return of Portia and Nerissa from Venice. Into the mouth of
Lorenzo is placed a series of meditations on the power of music:

> The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,
> (Act V, sc.1, lines 83-85)

As Portia and Nerissa enter, this is followed by yet another series of philosophical reflections on relativity. As Portia phrases it, " Nothing is good (I see) without respect," relating her observation both to the light from the house that was not visible while the moon shone, and to the sounds of instruments and birds, which sound sweeter by night than by day.

However beautifully phrased and harmoniously organised, it is difficult to make sense of this sequence in dramatic terms, except as purple patches bridging the gap to the final comic resolution, not of the love plot itself, which was effectively resolved as early as in Act III, but of the final consummation between the two pairs of lovers, which was delayed by the Shylock/Antonio trial, and given a final twist with the introduction of the ring complication.

In dramatic terms, there is no way of explaining away the fact that we have arrived at the epilogue. The minuscule lovers' tiffs left to be sorted out leave us with no sense of substantive unresolved conflict. The only way to make dramatic sense of Act V, accordingly, is to see it as a way of effecting closure by means of constructing a broad movement of mood, from night to early dawn. The entire act is permeated with references, metaphorical and otherwise, to the fact that this is a scene set at night - moving towards early dawn. It opens with Lorenzo and Jessica's "In Such a night "- dialogue. It continues with Portia and Bassanio meeting:

> *Bass.* We should hold day with the Antipodes,
> If you would walk in absence of the sun.
> *Portia* Let me give light, but let me not be light,
> For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,...
> (Act V, sc.1, ll. 124-130)

The closing lines of the play, spoken by Gratiano, are a final underscoring of this night/early dawn setting:

> *Gratiano* Let it be so, - the first inter'gatory
> That my Nerissa shall be sworn on, is,
> Whether till next night she had rather stay,
> Or go to bed now (being two hours to day):
> But were day come, I should wish it dark

Till I were couching with the doctor's clerk.
Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
So sore, as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.
(Act V, sc.1, lines 300-307)

So, although the play ends on a light note of sexual banter by a relatively peripheral character, the general sense of Shakespeare elaborately constructing a final movement towards comedic closure cannot be ignored.

It is, however, an indication of the dialogic strain of combining the Belmont and Rialto plots that Shakespeare felt it necessary to have a full final act to attempt to reconcile the heteroglossia of a play which seems to be coming apart at the seams in its attempt to be both a comedy, a romance and a problem play.

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William Blake, Thomas Thorild and Radical Swedenborgianism

ROBERT WILLIAM RIX

I.

On 14 April 1789, the English poet and painter William Blake (1757-1827) and his wife, Catherine, attended the First General Conference of the Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church at the chapel in Great Eastcheap (now Cannon Street) in London's East End. The conference was held in response to a circular letter of 7 December 1788, which had been distributed in 500 copies to "all the readers of the Theological Writings of the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg, who are desirous of rejecting, and separating themselves from, the Old Church, or the present Established Churches." The letter drew up forty-two propositions outlining the terms for a separation and was signed by the Blakes as a prerequisite for attendance.[1]

The Swedenborgian Church is the only religious institution we have any record of Blake ever having attended. However, his affiliation was not lasting. His scathing satire on Swedenborg, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (produced in 1790, if we are to trust the date Blake scribbled in blue ink on copy K of this work), stands

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[1] It is important to note that the Blakes signed as sympathisers, not as Church members. Among the seventy-seven signers, fifty-six were actual members, while the eighteen other names (among which we find William and Catherine) did not commit themselves to membership. The document and other papers related to the New Jerusalem Church have been reprinted in "New Jerusalem" 121-32.

as a testimony to the break.[2] Blake had an interest in Swedenborg since the late 1780s when he annotated several of the prophet's books.[3] But Blake did not only immerse himself in the millennial occultism of Swedenborg and others; he also read the political writings of the arch-radical Tom Paine, who, from the vantage point of enlightened *reason*, welcomed the French Revolution in *Rights of Man* (1791-92) as an inspiration for reform in Britain. Paine had earlier spoken in favour of American liberation from British monarchy in *Common Sense* (1776). Blake combined the strands of Painite republicanism and Swedenborgian spiritual Millennialism in the poems *The French Revolution* (1791) and *America: A Prophecy* (1793).

Below, I will make a comparison between Blake and the Swedish poet Thomas Thorild (1759-1808), as Thorild was not only politically radical, but also had an ambivalent relationship with Swedenborg. Furthermore, he is known to have been affiliated with the New Jerusalem Church in London approximately at the same time as Blake. The tendency in both Blake and Thorild scholarship has been to see the poets' attraction to Swedenborg as an intellectual detour unrelated to their political radicalism. I shall argue, however, that for both Blake and Thorild, social and political commitments were intrinsically tied up with a notion of promoting True Religion; and that Swedenborgianism, as it was developed by some interpreters in the London circle, was an important conduit for political radicalism that helped shape their writing.

It is not at all unlikely that Blake would have met Thorild, as the Swedish poet was in London between October 1788 and July 1790. During this time, he made contact with Carl Bernhard Wadström, a visiting Swede, who was baptised into the New Jerusalem Church in Great Eastcheap on Christmas day 1788 (Tafel 2: 811). Wadström had been president of the Swedenborgian Exegetical and Philosophical Society in Sweden and became a

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[2] For the reasons behind Blake's dispute with the increasingly conservative New Jerusalem Church, see Rix.

[3] On the dating of the annotations, see Bentley 1988: 128.

leading member of the New Jerusalem Church in London. His political sympathies were clear. Wadström combined his interest in Swedenborg with frequent visits to the reformist Manchester Constitutional Society.[4] In 1795 he left for France to offer his services to the French Directory, and was later appointed chief director of the *Crédit agricole* in Paris, where he lived until his death in 1799 in high favour of the Directory and Napoleon.[5]

In the 1780s, Blake was writing semi-Shakespearean plays with political content in *Poetical Sketches* (1783) and social satire in the unpublished novel *An Island in the Moon* (*c.*1784). Thorild was advocating democracy and liberty in his journal *Nya Granskaren* [New Enquirer], which he began in Sweden in 1784. In a letter of the same year, Thorild shows that his radical aspirations went beyond Sweden. He was making plans to travel to England to collaborate with celebrated men of the opposition for a pan-European revolution. However, when Thorild returned home in the late summer of 1790, he had failed to establish a network of connections on the scale he had imagined. Despite the disappointment, he continued to write polemical tracts, articles and literary works throughout the 1790s, in which he presented a clearly socialist programme. His aim was to eradicate all inequalities between rich and poor, master and servant. A pamphlet entitled *Ärligheten* [Honesty] was deemed seditious, and he was forced into exile in 1792. Over the next couple of years, he sought refuge in Denmark and Germany.

Meanwhile in England, Blake had scribbled a memorandum in his notebook: "I say I shant live five years And if I live one it will be a wonder" ([dated 1793] Blake 694). This seems to allude to the possible threat of imprisonment in typhus-ridden Newgate gaol, deportation to Botany Bay, or even execution, which were the punishments awaiting radicals who were found guilty of publishing

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[4] Invitation cards from the Manchester Constitutional Society can be found among C.B. Wadström's papers in Norrköpings Stadsbibliotek.

[5] Two rather different biographies are offered by Hagen, who lauds him as a Swedish national hero; and Nelson, who presents a more critical and less flattering picture.

material or engaging in activities of a seditious or treasonable nature. In fact, Blake was prosecuted in 1803 for having uttered words in front of one of the king's soldiers, which, according to the indictment, "wickedly and seditiously" intended "to bring our said Lord the King into hatred and Scandal" (Bentley 1977: 132). Fortunately, Blake was acquitted.

During his stay in England, Thorild wrote several works that could be perceived in a similar manner. But, like Blake, he seems to have kept the most seditious material in notebook draft. One example is the unpublished *The Royal Moon or on Insanity in Politics* of 1789, which was a republican and anti-Pittite tract. In this, Thorild praises the "magnanimous Opposition now in France," which, in the early years of the Revolution, was generally acceptable. More problematic was the reference to "insanity" in the title, as the "mad" King George III had just recovered from his bout of mental instability in February of that year. Thorild does not mince his words, calling George III the "little cunning fumbler of a mad King!" and referring to England as a place where "the influence of a Court cannot be distinguished from the influence of a Bedlam" (2: 305-6, 313).

Thorild pursued the republican track further when he composed the poem *Cromwel: A Sketch of an Epic Poem* (Thorild 1: 195-97), which remained in draft. It contained another transparent reference to George III: "Cromwel – at this drear name the maddened brains/ Of Kings are struck." In line with those of the English radicals who saw themselves as political heirs to the Civil War activists, Thorild calls Cromwell a "hero" who "strikes foes, priests, kings" in "wrath" and whose name is a "dread thunder" in the ears of "rogues Majestic," confirming his status as both regicidal punisher and visionary champion of elected parliaments. Blake had weaved his republicanism into the thinly disguised allegory *Gwin: King of Norway* from *Poetical Sketches*, in which we find the wish to "Pull down the tyrant to the dust,/ Let Gwin be humbled" (Blake 418). Under the cloak of a Shakespearean history play from the same collection, *King Edward the Third*, he had criticised a constantly warring monarchy which would invade France under the

pretext of pursuing "glorious liberty" for Englishmen (5. 53-54; Blake 436). This was continued in the works of the early 1790s. The violent outcome of Cromwell's and the French Republic's accomplishments was given graphic expression in *The Book of Ahania* (1795). In the "illuminated printing," combining text and picture, plate five accompanies the story of the struggle to overthrow a tyrannical father with a design depicting a jumbled assembly of a severed head and dismembered body parts.

In both his writings and letters written prior to his arrival in London, Thorild had criticised Cromwell as a "beast" of the social world. But in England he is evidently swayed by the radical ideas of his new environment, and Cromwell is mythologized to become a *typological* and *prophetic* embodiment of revolutionary energy, which transcends the historical figure. Thorild's "Cromwel" defeats the "Ghost Divine" of *all* "Tyrants": Egyptian, Greek, Ottoman, and Imperial Rome. He descends on "deeds tremendous of dark ancient times,/ Empires gigantic crushed," so "colossal kings" are "Hurled headlong down." In comparison, Blake's contemporaneous work, *The French Revolution*[6] (a highly inaccurate account of the early stages of the Revolution), subsumes people and events within a larger *typological* reading of history.[7] For instance, the King calls on his minister, "Rise, Necker: the ancient dawn calls us/ To awake from slumbers of five thousand years" (lines7-8; Blake, 286), indicating that Louis XVI is really a name for *all* tyrannical kingship. This is further confirmed by the references to the monarch as the "terrors of ancient Kings" and the "spirit of ancient Kings" (lines 59, 72; Blake 288-89).

Like "Cromwel," the revolutionary hero of Blake's poem, "Fayette" (i.e., the Marquis de Lafayette, 1757-1834), also transcends the historical person. He is an agent who activates the

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[6] The typescript is dated 1791, but this was probably in anticipation of the time of publication, which never took place. It was probably written the year before.

[7] A long time ago, Halliburton suggested Erich Auerbach's term *figura* for Blake's mode of representation in *The French Revolution*.

libertarian iconoclasm of Rousseau and Voltaire;[8] he gives *body* to a revolutionary *spirit*, which is eternal but has hitherto been disembodied. Supporters of the Revolution in England held Lafayette in high regard, not least Paine, who dedicated the second part of *Rights of Man* (1792) to him. Both "Fayette" and "Cromwel" are prophetic deliverers inaugurating the Millennium. Fayette has the Christ-like power to awaken "the spirits of the dead" from their "graves" (lines 284, 301; Blake, 299). Thorild eulogises Cromwell as a "mortal Jove/ The Hero chosen of Revenge Divine," who to Bishops is the dread sound of "the last judgment or of hell-gate's jarring." Common to both poets, the new age is, above all, the end to the mystifying power of the churches that have kept the people in mental chains. In Blake's *The French Revolution*, the pious monks of France are "Driven out by the fiery cloud of Voltaire, and thund'rous rocks of Rousseau" (line 276; Blake 298) as a harbinger of the end to all the chaste and life-denying principles that have restrained man. This can be seen as a counter to Edmund Burke's claim in his hugely influential anti-revolutionary tract, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), in which "the confiscation of the goods of monks and nuns and the abolition of their order" serve as a symbol of the dissolution of the social morality which was the very basis of civilised society (260).

Blake's prophetic voice of radical politics is echoed in much of the writing on prophecy that swamped the market in the wake of the French Revolution.[9] In *Religious Politics; or, the present Times foretold* (1795), the biblical prophecy of Micah is interpreted as a series of "*metaphors, types, similitude &c.*" by which the prophet is "discovering to us the nature of those powers and authorities, that have both in Church and State, usurped dominion over the minds and bodies of men in all parts of the world" (1-2). Hence, when it is prophesied that "all graven images" will be "beaten to pieces" (line 5), this is interpreted to mean that "all insignias" of royalty and "the

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[8] Over Fayette's head "the soul of Voltaire shone fiery, and over the army of Rousseau his white cloud unfolded" (line 282; Blake 299).

[9] For a general overview, see Mee.

priestcraft by which the clergy obtain so much wealth shall be destroyed by the fiery rage of an oppressed and incensed populace … all their honorary titles and distinctions, whether Monks, Friars, Jesuits, Popes, Bishops, Lords, Esquires, Reverends, and Right Reverends … shall all be abolished." This, the exegete adds, "also has been done in France" (19).[10]

For Blake and Thorild alike, the divine spirit of revolution was not felt to be symbolised to full justification by any historical characters, so they would both invent mythological figures to give full justice to the magnitude of this revolutionary energy. For Blake, this led to the introduction of Orc, who is first named in *America* (1793). Yet, earlier in "A Song of Liberty," the concluding verse prophecy of the *Marriage* (pl. 25-27; Blake 44-45), a prototype of Orc is incarnated as "the son of fire." It requires only a rudimentary knowledge of the Bible to recognise that Blake consciously raids the storehouse of imagery found in the Revelation of St. John to give his poem a determinedly millennial feel. It seems to have gone unnoticed, however, that the "son" is an aggrandizement of "Fayette" on a prophetic scale. The "son" is first seen standing on "the infinite mountains" on the other side of the "atlantic sea" as a prodigy of American Liberty extending its influence across the ocean to Europe. This geographical journey parallels Lafayette's career. Having fought on the side of the Americans against British royalist forces (1777-82), Lafayette went on to command the French National Guard (1789-92). The "son of fire," who is seen falling "like the sinking sun" to appear triumphantly "in his eastern cloud," is perfectly analogous with Fayette, who is described as a "sun" rising "from dark mountains" like "a flame of fire" (lines 270-76; Blake 298). Fayette puts the royal army to flight (lines 287-93; Blake 299) just as the "son" will rout the king and his host and drive them to wander "the waste wilderness."

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[10] The exegesis of Micah, in which the interpreter finds *typological* references to King George III's Civil List, Prime Minister Pitt's raising of taxes and the government's suspension of the Habeas Corpus act to contain radical activists (99), was published by the radical printer Daniel Isaac Eaton, who was convicted of sedition no less than eight times.

The "son" (or sun) is the allegorical light of a new consciousness that defeats the "night" and "dark dismay" that the "gloomy king" inhabits. Embodying the uncontrollable energy of revolution, the "son" is an ambiguous hero; he is "the new, born terror" both welcomed and feared. Similarly, Thorild's "Cromwel" is a "terrific giant shade" (a very Blakean phrase indeed), who defeats the "mental night" that is "*Oppression*"; he is the "germ" of the "hero" who "shall be born / To punish nations and to punish kings." He can only be admired, Thorild tells us, "half-trembling" as one admires a "delightful awe from thunder."

In 1787 (the year before his departure for England), Thorild drafted *Harmen* [Indignation], which is a similarly prophetic poem about Thor – a god-hero defined by his thunders – who strikes fear in the hearts of tyrants. Thor, who has little to do with the god of Nordic mythology, has been compared with Goethe's Prometheus, but he is equally close in conception to Blake's Orc in *America*, who also has the countenance of thunder-god.[11] Orc and Thor are united in their struggle to overthrow the religious tyranny of theocratic rulers, who base their power on commanding the Holy Word. In *Harmen*, Thorild's god-hero proclaims: "My name is not THOR: I am INDIGNATION" (Thorild 1: 86; my translation).

It is in the nature of True Religion to shake up the blind acceptance of wrongs. Strife is at the core of the Gospel message, as Blake makes clear in the proclamation in the *Marriage* that Jesus "came not to send Peace but a Sword" (pl. 17; Blake 40). This emphasis is felt throughout, as when the prophet Isaiah states that "the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God" (pl.12; Blake 38). For whatever differences there may be between Blake and Thorild in terms of theological doctrine, they both see True Religion as something that, under the present circumstances, must be fought for; it is a dynamism that must awaken man to action against the false religion of the Church which has pacified him to a state of slumber.

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[11] As the thirteen colonies awaken to a new consciousness of Liberty, "deep thunder roll'd/ Around their shores indignant burning with the fires of Orc" (lines 13-14; Blake 55),

II.

In both Blake's and Thorild's writings of the late 1780s and early 1790s, we find an attempt to define the nature of True Religion by way of amending the errors of misguided theologies and philosophies. For both poets it is "indignation" rather than the traditional Christian virtue of "humility" that constitutes True Religion. A parallel can be drawn to Paine's *The Age of Reason* (1794-95), in which he attacks the "feigned or fabulous morality" of Christianity, which teaches the pacifying morality that "*If a man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.*" This is not only "assassinating the dignity of forbearance" but also "sinking man into a spaniel" (Paine 598). Thorild anticipated such criticism in *On the Dignity of a Free Death: With a View to State that Grand Right of Man* (c.1788-89),[12] in which he writes: "Humility is a base stupid *Lie*, called godliness, to deny every worth & grandure in Man, deny his own *true right* ... kiss the dust & glory in wretchedness. Patience, in consequence, is the woefull resignation to every shame and tyranny" (Thorild 5: 515). One may here recall Blake's "The Human Abstract" of *Songs of Experience* (1793), in which it is precisely "Humility," which is the seed from which the Tree of Mystery will grow and cast its shadow over mankind.

Thorild pursued his critique of church Christianity most vehemently in the prose tract *The Sermon of Sermons* (1790). In its very last sentence a hope is raised that the words on the page will eventually ignite the flames of revolutionary fervour: "the Sentiments of this Sermon are only some Sparks of Indignation" (Thorild 2: 349). He praises the prophetic voice that speaks the "Divine Truth," which flies above the "Languages upon Earth" and which have been "wrung by Design, or mistaken by Weakness" to allow an 'immense Confusion of Lies, Imposture, and Tyrannies [to] spread over the Earth" (Thorild 2: 399-400). Thorild's bardic voice is prophetic in the way that Blake's bards are prophetic: their

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[12] The tract was written in England and survives only in a manuscript transcribed Thorild's friend Sven Heurlin.

truth challenges the social restraints imposed on man by false morality. In Thorild's poem "Skaldekonsten" [The Bardic Art] (published 1789, but written before he left for England), he proclaims, "Sing with ecstasy! BARD, your own glory" (Thorild 1: 178; my translation). This is more that a little reminiscent of Blake who, in the "Introduction" to *The Songs of Experience*, admonishes the reader "Hear the voice of the Bard!" (Blake 18), and in "The Voice of the Ancient Bard" of the same collection, describes the bardic words as "truth new born" (Blake 31).

Thorild defines the bardic voice as what upholds "Justice" and "righteousness." By virtue of its "prophetical horror of stile," its effect is to "brighten" and "inflame the sense" in a way the "frigid literal speller of truths" cannot. The prophet's feat is that he "has dared to *blame*" the ruling powers of oppression (Thorild 2: 324). Thorild's prime example of this is Isaiah, just as it is for Blake, who, in the *Marriage*, has Isaiah proclaim that he "cared not for consequences but wrote" (pl. 12; Blake 38). Yet it is the lot of the prophetic voice to suffer persecution. In Thorild's "Harmen," Thor's championing of an original and uncorrupted faith is a threat to the artifice of the priests, who react by calling for his punishment as a heretic: "Burn!/ Burn him! cry/ The holy men, the tyrants and learned men:/ And the fire flames against the cloud in the sky" (1: 190; my translation). Similarly, in "The little Boy Lost" from *Songs of Innocence*, Blake reminds us that those who speak an unpopular truth must suffer on "Albion's shores." The "little boy" speaks the truth immediately visible to a child of innocence. As this challenges established Church doctrines, a "Priest" has him "burn'd ... in a holy place/ Where many had been burn'd before" (Blake 29).

In *On the Dignity of a Free Death*, Thorild draws heavily on Enlightenment reason in a way untypical of Blake; yet he gives it a familiar prophetic/ millennial framework. The tract is introduced as a manuscript written by a prophetic "Druid," which has been discovered and now is translated "from the original Celtic." This

literary gesture is clearly inspired by Macpherson's "discovery" of Ossian's writings, which Thorild admired greatly – as did Blake.[13] But where Ossian defined *heroism* as the warrior's martial fortitude against a tyrannical power, Thorild's Druid addresses the nature of moral prowess against religious tyranny. Suicide is made the touchstone for man's self-determination in the face of priestly attempts to control human life even beyond death. In a letter of 1791, Thorild made clear the radicalism which is central to this claim; *On the Dignity of a Free Death* was written "against all the kings and priests, and the persistence of Slavery" (cited in Arvidson 417; my translation).

According to Thorild in *On the Dignity of a Free Death*, tyrannical men have capitalised on man's forgetting his inherent divinity and, as a consequence, "have given us Kings instead of eternal Right; and Priests instead of eternal Truth; and Superstition with dreary grimaces instead of lovely divine Nature." He yearns for a lost age when "It was not said the King is divine; but *Man is divine*: not this Emperor is a native god, but *Man is a Native god*." Thorild's advice is that the "Man who feels in his breast the spark of Divinity" ought "1. to learn Thruth [*sic*] & Magnanimity" and "2. to slay the Tyrant" insofar that "he will not disdain his [own] being," but "soar." Or, as he also states, a "divine spark must kindle in the breast of every Man; and he must disdain even the shadow of misery, must glow in fiery indignation at the very mien of Tyranny" (Thorild 5: 502, 498, 506, 515). In *The Sermon of Sermons*, Thorild further laments that man's forgetting of his divinity has made it possible for "haughty Kings" to "proclaim their most mad Law in the Temples, as from the authority of God" (Thorild 2: 344). This warrants comparison with plate 11 of Blake's *Marriage*, where we find a similar history of how oppression is enabled by men having forgotten "that All deities reside in the human breast." The loss of contact with the internal Divine has allowed priests to tyrannise man through the moral cramming "that the Gods had orderd such

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[13] Thorild writes in the "Preface" to *Cromwell*, "I love among the Poets only Ossian and Shakespeare" (Thorild 1: 195), For Blake's views on Macpherson, see his annotations to Wordsworth's *Poems* (Blake 666).

things" (Blake 38). A likely common source for both poets' formulations may be Swedenborg, who in *True Christian Religion* explained that the original religion of "the most antient People in the World, who lived in that time which is called the golden Age" was corrupted with "the Establishment of Monarchical Power, when worldly and sensual Affections began to close up the superior Parts of the Understanding" (n9).[14] It is Swedenborg's hostility to priestly tyranny that provides the link between the political radicalism of Blake and Thorild and Swedenborgianism, as I will now discuss.

III.

Of the works written in English during the sojourn in London, Thorild most clearly appropriates Swedenborg in *True Heavenly Religion Restored* (1790), which was published by Robert Hindmarsh, the artisan printer who founded the New Jerusalem Church. The main body of the work consists of musings on the Divine Order of the Universe, which mostly continue themes already familiar from his previous writings. But in an appendix entitled "The Principal Beauties of Swedenborg," Thorild makes the following dedication:

> And now I dare tell you – that this true and Divine Religion
> is, as to the general Character, even that of EMANUEL
> SWEDENBORG: Who, if God, Spirits, a Religion, be at
> All – has certainly brought us sublime Revelations, and may
> be considered as a Prophet of a third rising Covenant, or
> that of *open Truth* (Thorild 2: 412-17).

Thorild praises Swedenborg for speaking "open Truth," which we must take to stand in contrast to the mystification of religion to be found in the churches. Swedenborg had contended that his teaching was a new revelation that would replace the corrupted beliefs perpetuated in all previous Christian churches. And although Swedenborg never lent support to any directly radical or

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[14] All references to Swedenborg's works are marked with "n" for the section number.

revolutionary party ideology, comments made by readers of Swedenborg in London at the time make it clear that in setting individual illumination as the desideratum of True Religion, he unwittingly gave confidence to those in society who felt disempowered under the traditional ecclesiastical institutions. We know that in the early years of the New Church, the membership consisted largely of persons who had "come out of the 'liberal' and 'dissenting' ecclesiastical bodies; and brought with them into the New church their old and favourite notions of democratic government" (Odhner 37). The politicisation of Swedenborgian doctrines penetrated the Church to its very core. William Hill, an Anglican minister and Swedenborgian confessor, found reason to complain in a letter of 1794 to Swedenborgians in America that the New Jerusalem Church in England had been engaged in "questions relating to modes of government, both ecclesiastical and civil."[15]

There was a widespread tendency among segments of the Swedenborgians to turn the prophet's teaching into a social gospel that fitted a radical and anticlerical political outlook. We may here remember Blake's comment in the *Marriage*, "It is so with Swedenborg; he shews the folly of churches & exposes hypocrites," as evidence of this posture. Yet, as Blake was becoming critical of the prophet, he would add that Swedenborg, imagining he was the "single one on earth that ever broke a net [of false religion]," in fact had made his teaching yet another "religion" claiming absolute priority over all other religions. For this reason "Swedenborg has not written one new truth," Blake claims, but "all the old falsehoods" (pl. 21-22; Blake 43). For Blake, as for Thorild, the freedom of a personal (inner) religion free of all priestly dictates had absolute priority.

It is significant that Thorild's collection of sixty-one *Maxims and Reflections concerning Religion, Morals and Nature* (1790) was published by the Fleet Street bookseller G. Kearsley.[16] We have no information of

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[15] Letter to Robert Carter of the Swedenborgian Society in Baltimore (quoted in Block 329).

[16] Although Thorild's name does not appear on the publication, various notes and letters by people who knew him certifies the attribution of the book to him. See the editorial notes in Thorild 9: 245-49.

their relationship, but, considering Thorild's radical inclinations, the connection seems not entirely arbitrary. In the same year, Kearsley published the pro-revolutionary *The History of France from the first establishment of that monarchy to the present Revolution* and the translation of the notorious Revolution text *The Livre Rouge, or Red Book*.

Several of the *Maxims* continue the anticlericalism of Thorild's other English writings. But most of them express a positive theology, in which the restoration of man's sense of his own divinity is posited as the means to overcome the restraint brought on by a coercive priesthood. In an implicit counter to all priestly attempts at humbling man, Thorild praises the "desires of the Soul," its "perpetual wants," as "for ever increasing and boundless" (Thorild 5: 525-26). It is with the same aim Blake in *There is No Natural Religion* (1788) had applauded "The desire of Man" as "Infinite" and hence claimed its "possession" was "Infinite" (Blake 2-3).

In the *Marriage*, Blake proclaims that "God only Acts & Is, in existing beings or Men" (pl. 16; Blake 40). The *Marriage* is Blake's attack on attempts to "abstract the mental deities"; this was what led to the creation of "Priesthood" and "men forgot that All deities reside in the human breast" (pl. 11). For comparison, Thorild, in the *Maxims*, also criticised the idea of an external Godhead as imposing "Prejudices for the purpose of covering over a number of vile inclinations." "God," he further proclaims, "is pleased to shew men their weakness in order to induce them to confide in his Omnipotence," and it is in this way that priests are created as "*Politic people*" (Thorild 5: 528).

In the miscellany of genres and styles that makes up the *Marriage*, Blake includes a section containing seventy-two "Proverbs of Hell" (plates 7-10), which he may originally have thought of as a separate project (Viscomi 321-22). Here, conventional wisdom is turned on its head, providing us with a series of truths that he proudly calls "infernal wisdom," because pious men of religion will see them as hellish doctrines. Proverbs have traditionally been used to teach restraint by admonition, but Blake's "Proverbs of Hell" and Thorild's *Maxims* (most likely written in 1790) are a series of antinomian and anti-authoritarian statements, encouraging man to free his impulsive

energies. Blake's assertions are meant to challenge the tyrannical forces that teach humility to man: "The pride of the peacock is the glory of God/ The lust of the goat is the bounty of God/ The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God/ The nakedness of woman is the work of God." Blake sees the priestly banishment of man's natural desires as political in both *intent* and *effect*: "Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion" (pl. 8; Blake 36).

In regard to Thorild's English publications, there are some interesting bibliographic details that warrant attention. *The Sermon of Sermons* was printed by the bookseller W. Nicoll, who was known for publishing radical tracts, but it was published at the author's own expense. This does not mean that Nicoll necessarily disagreed with its political content, but – more likely – that he was not convinced of its commercial appeal. Was there a market for prophetic radicalism? Thorild came in for a harsh treatment when *The Sermon of Sermons* was reviewed in *The Analytical Review* on 13 September 1790. The journal was devoted to the dissemination of liberal ideas and was published by the radical bookseller Joseph Johnson, who was Blake's most consistent employer throughout the 1790s, commissioning from him numerous engravings. Thus, it is not for its political conclusions that it is faulted, but for its religious Enthusiasm. Its prophetic and millennial accents seem to have caused problems:

> This sermon, as the author is pleased to call it, appears
> to be the ravings, rather than the reveries, of a disturbed
> imagination; yet now and then, a just thought occurs,
> quaintly expressed, resembling flashes, which sometimes
> are mixed in the rant of those poor wretches, whose
> faculties are no longer under the direction of their
> judgment. (IV [1790]: 108)

Johnson and the group of British radicals who frequented his famous dinners were "liberal in [their] politics, but also rationalist in methodology, Socinian in theology and sceptical in regard to prophecy, miracle, and other manifestations of transcendental revelation" (Essick 192). Visionary and prophetic enthusiasm was seen as less than respectable. For many rationalists, it was believed

simply to propagate the religious unreason that reason was meant to oppose in order to further the perfectibility of society. It may therefore strike us as remarkable that Johnson sold *True Heavenly Religion Restored* from his shop in St. Paul's Churchyard.[17] This indicates that some of Johnson's customers did bridge the gap between Painite rationalism and Swedenborgianism. Paine and Swedenborg were philosophically compatible for Blake as they were for his friend and fellow engraver, William Sharpe, who was both a member of the Theosophical Society (a forerunner of the New Jerusalem Church) since 1787 *and* the Society for Constitutional Information, a reformist organisation which had been given a new lease of life in the early 1790s to promote Paine's writings.

The ambivalence of the Johnson circle's attitude towards their religiously inspired consorts in radical politics may be seen in the fact that Johnson prepared a typescript of Blake's *The French Revolution* for printing in 1791, but – for reasons never explained – decided against publishing it. Perhaps, one may speculate, after having seen the reception that Thorild got among his reviewers and regular customers, Johnson had second thoughts about publishing a work like Blake's, which indeed could read like the "reveries of a disturbed imagination"?

IV.

Prior to his England visit, Thorild had propagated what he himself named *Pantheism*. This was an exultation derived from contemplating all living beings. It can best be described as a self-made, idiosyncratic philosophy, although it borrows much of its theological substance from Spinoza.[18] In the notebook he kept while in England (Thorild 2: 419-31), Thorild mentions David Williams, an English deist and radical, who was often referred to as "the Orpheus of Nature." His *Apology for professing the Religion of Nature* (1788-89) would have appealed to Thorild in its making clear the

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[17] Joseph Johnson is identified as the seller of the pamphlet on the title-page.

[18] Generally on Thorild's religious and pantheistic views, see Herrlin.

political justification behind nurturing a Religion of Nature. The Divinity of the Natural Universe was available to *all* mankind and spurned religious superstition based on priestly secrecy, mystification and monopolising tendencies. Williams' reputation was great enough for the French Convention to invite him to help writing their new constitution, and he was made an honorary citizen of France.

But Thorild never embraced any cold mechanistic deistic position. Throughout his writing, he is driven by what he calls "Passion" (his term for the soul's *eros*), which is the endeavour to merge with the higher Order of the Universe. In the celebrated poem *Passionerne* [The Passions] (1775), Thorild explains his poetics as the desire to see "in the minute the great, in the existing what is to come, in the visible the invisible, in the finite the infinite" (Thorild 1: 52; my translation). This is similar to Blake, who would stretch his perceptive powers "To see a World in a Grain of Sand/ And a Heaven in a Wild Flower" ("Auguries of Innocence"; Blake 490).

Even in such theological statements, seemingly unhampered by politics, there are inevitable links to Swedenborg's diatribe against the Christian churches and the way they have lulled man into spiritual inaptitude. In the *Marriage*, Blake asks the very Swedenborgian question: "How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way, Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five?" (pl. 7; Blake 35). Beyond the echo of a line from Thomas Chatterton,[19] what most clearly stimulated Blake to this line of questioning was Swedenborg's constant affirmation of a divine world beyond the five senses. In *Divine Love and Divine Wisdom* (1788), which Blake owned and annotated, Swedenborg elucidates at length how the Divine in the natural universe has been obscured by the churches. He complains how "all the Things of Religion, which are called Spiritual, have been removed out of the Sight of Man," by "Councils and certain Leaders in the Church." They have misled Christians to "blindly" believe that being born to a "natural" world, they cannot perceive anything "separate from what is

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[19] See Harold Bloom's commentary in Blake 898.

natural." To preserve their worldly privileges, these religious tyrants have conned their subjects into believing that the "spiritual" world "transcend[s] the Understanding." Priests have deceived the people by claiming that the spiritual level of cosmos is ungraspable and unreachable; it is "like a Bird which flieth above the Air in the Aether where the Eye-sight doth not reach." Swedenborg defied all such mental restrains imposed by the churches. He wanted to empower man and staked the claim that the spiritual dimension present in all living matter is visible to all who dare open the doors of perception closed by priestly lies. The spiritual world is "like a Bird of Paradise, which flieth near the Eye, and toucheth it's Pupil with it's [sic] beautiful Wings, and wisheth to be seen." And "seeing" in this way is true faith and religion, because by "the Sight of the Eye is meant the Sight of the Understanding" (n334).

After having made contact with the Swedenborgians, Thorild's theory of perception underwent a subtle and yet remarkable transformation, which draws his English works closer to a Blakean vision of the world. In *Maxims*, Thorild pushes his former Deistic theories aside to explain that there is both "Reason with and without Revelation," and the relation between the two is "the same as between restored and fallen Man" (Thorild 5: 523). He will now proclaim that "we habour [sic] a higher being within us" which "exculpates the Sciences" and "refutes the abettors of a merely animal Life." Without our "desires appertaining to a sublimer sphere … it would soon appear, how little so simple and narrow a world" the material universe would be. From this he concludes: "how much more therefore is Man of a Spiritual, than of a corporeal Nature!" (Thorild 5: 537).

In *All Religions are One* (1788), Blake would similarly clarify that "the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences" (Blake 1); i.e., to *know* one must *experience*. But as "none by traveling over known lands can find out the unknown," he deduces that "an universal Poetic Genius exists." Blake presents this as a prophetic truth spoken to man in the fallen world by what he in the epigram calls "The Voice of one crying in the Wilderness" (Blake 1). The limitations imposed on man when relying merely on

physical perception is explained in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793), where Blake, in a near echo of Thorild's maxim, has Oothoon complain, "They told me that I had fives sense to inclose me up/ And they inclos'd my infinite brain into a narrow circle" (2: 31-32; Blake 47).

For Blake, the "Poetic Genius" is equally a creative and experiencing faculty. It is the origin of all religious mythologies, for this faculty of higher inspiration is what "by the Ancients was call'd an Angel & Spirit/ & Demon." This is close to Thorild's notion of "Kraft," which is his word for Imagination. In a Swedish essay of the late 1780s, he writes that "Kraft" is what has "filled nature with spirits ... and is now the belief of all peoples today. The Greek's Demons, Sylphs, Gnomes; Devils, Ghosts, ... God and the Devil." It is, however, destroyed by those Christians who separate the divinities from the praise of all living Nature and create "empty abstractions," "a power without an object" ("Kraft," in Thorild 1: 358-60; my translation). Blake seems to have seized on a similar notion. His history of the development of "abstract" religion on plate 11 of the *Marriage* (referred to above) may here be quoted in full:

> The ancient Poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses calling them by the names and adorning them with the properties of woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged & numerous senses could perceive. And particularly they studied the genius of each city & country. placing it under its mental deity. Till a system was formed, which some took advantage of & enslav'd the vulgar by attempting to realize or abstract the mental deities from their objects: thus began Priesthood. Choosing forms of worship from poetic tales. And at length they pronounced that the Gods had orderd such things. Thus men forgot that All deities reside in the human breast. (Blake 38)

It is possible that Swedenborg, who raged against the Christian churches and their priests, provides a model for the notions here. In

his discussion of the biblical Commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," Swedenborg explains that it was the lapse from a heightened imagination to mere physical perception that resulted in man idolising false deities:

> the Worship of Idols prevailed in great Part of the Kingdoms of Asia ... Types and Representations, were such, that Divine Things were exhibited under various Figures and Sculptures, which the Vulgar, losing Sight of their Significations, began to worship as Gods. (Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion* n291)

Blake's proclamation in *America* that "To make the desarts blossom" man must realize that "every thing that lives is holy" (8.8-13; Blake 54) indicates that tyranny exists only when man is locked in behind the doors of the five senses; therefore the final liberation in *America* is an apocalyptic event by which "the five gates ... [are] consum'd, & their bolts and hinges melted" (16.22; Blake 58).

> The phrase, "every thing that lives is holy," first appeared, appropriately, as the concluding statement of "A Song of Liberty" in the anti-Swedenborgian *Marriage*. Swedenborg had written that the Law was the most important gift of God to guide man, and thus "The commandments of the Decalogue" were "so holy that nothing could be holier" (Swedenborg, *True Christian Religion* n283). Blake's statement reads as a counter to the prophet, of whom he was evidently becoming sceptical. In the annotations to *Divine Providence*, Blake turns Swedenborg's anticlericalism, in which he had found much of his inspiration, against the prophet and accuses the author of serving the "Priests interest" (Blake 609).

The Sermon of Sermons was apparently written at a time when Thorild was less keen on Swedenborg, and he searches for reasons why a large number of dissenters would convert to Swedenborgianism. "It is strange," he observes, how so noble a Man

as a Quaker, from the *divine* vivid LIGHT *of his Soul,* now can throw himself in the Dreams and Sophistry of a Hundred Volumes" (Thorild 2: 348). The mere fact that Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia* in its English translation ran into twelve volumes and filled eight thousand pages would in itself be enough to warrant such commentary, but looking at the lists of available material printed at the back of Robert Hindmarsh's publications only adds to the impression. Swedenborg's voluminous production also becomes the object of Blake's irony on plate 19 of the *Marriage,* where the speaker tells us how he, on his celestial journey into the sun, finally "sunk from the glorious clime," being weighed down by "taking in my hand Swedenborgs volumes" (pl. 19; Blake 42).

V.

There was one part of Swedenborg's doctrines, which seems to have attracted both Blake and Thorild. When speaking in favour of "The Principal Beauties of Swedenborgianism," Thorild holds that the most "sublime and wonderous [*sic*]" of Swedenborg's doctrines is that of "*Conjugal Love.*" He finishes the appendix with the following statement:

> ... though all these Doctrines be sublime and wonderous, there still is one Doctrine so peculiar to Swedenborg that it will appear not less new than astonishing in itself. That is his Idea of *Marriage* or *Conjugal Love* – which he looks upon as the very *Essence of heavenly Joy,* and the only State of Man where the Divine Influence can be truly received; because the mystic Union of Man and the Lord himself is nothing else the just such a Love ... conjugal Love is clearly the first noble Trial of heavenly Love here below, being a Sacrificing of one's *Self* for a higher and Divine Order of Happiness. (Thorild 2: 416-17).

In emphasising Swedenborg's theories of the mystical-divine union between the two sexes, Thorild evidently joined forces with his

Swedenborgian contact, C. B. Wadström, who with five other members of the New Jerusalem Church (among them Robert Hindmarsh, who printed *True Heavenly Religion Restored*) had been excluded in 1790 for propagating Swedenborg's sexual doctrines. These had remained unpublished, as conservative members considered them to be heterodoxy. That Thorild's tract was published around the very time of this dispute makes it difficult not to see the statement as being deliberately polemic.

We may here turn to Wadström, who with another Swedish Swedenborgian, August Nordenskjöld, and some of their international Masonic contacts, published a pamphlet in English describing a plan for establishing a colony on the coast of Sierra Leone which was to be founded and run on Swedenborgian principles. Its title is more than a little indicative of the politics underwriting the project: *Plan for a Free Community upon the Coast of Africa under the Protection of Great Britain; but Intirely Independent of All European Laws and Governments* (London: Robert Hindmarsh, 1789). In an appendix to the pamphlet, a number of articles for governance in the colony are set up. These are conceived on a fairly democratic basis with suffrage for all adult males to an assembly and the dissolution of all social classes. Central to the argument of the *Plan* is the eventual abolition of slavery, and that the "European" and the "Negro" should live together in harmony (see esp. Article xv). The political intentions go beyond the question of abolition, for, as the authors ask, "To what purpose is Spiritual Liberty without Civil Liberty?" (xi). There are in fact two kinds of slavery to be abolished: that of the Negro's literal and the European's "Civil slavery" under the "abject servility to innumerable monied Tyrants" (iv-v; *Plan* 50).

If we go beneath the veneer of polite social utilitarianism in the *Plan for a Free Community*, it is quite clear that the whole project was nurtured in the soil of millennial Enthusiasm – a return to innocence. Already on the page following the title, Revelations 21: 5 is quoted: "*Behold, I make all Things New.*" The Swedenborgians saw here an opportunity of establishing an external kingdom in which Swedenborg's dispensation of an "internal" Millennium could

thrive. For the Swedenborgians, socio-political liberation and millennial thinking were indiscriminate areas.

Wadström, Nordenskjöld and their associates saw love between married couples laid waste by a degenerate social structure: "It is distressing to observe marriages in their present state are but Seminaries for a corrupt Generation ... false Religions and false Politics have enveloped them in such a thick Darkness" (v-vii). Matrimony as a ruinous bond is also a recurrent theme in Blake's writing. He refers memorably to the "marriage hearse" ("London"; Blake 27) and laments that "she who burns with youth. and knows no fixed lot; is bound/ In spells of law to one she loaths" (*Visions of the Daughters of Albion* 5: 21-12; Blake 49). On the frontispiece design, this is illustrated by the central female character in the poem, Oothoon, being bound with chains to her rapist and tormentor, Bromion. The pain of real love banished is symbolised by Oothoon's ineffectual lover, Theotormon (a name often interpreted to mean "tormented by theology"), who sits behind them in a contracted position, hiding his head.

In the Swedenborgians' *Plan*, the economic and political basis underwriting the establishment of a "free community" revolves around the restoration of man's erotic life:

> The ultimate Foundation of all kinds of *Powers*, as well in Individuals as in whole Communities, consists in that Class which I call Virility or Conjugal Power . . . Now the first elementary, powerful, and universal Union, or Bond of Society, is the *Love of the Sex*. If we deprive ourselves intirely of this, we shall never be able to become rich and great, because then we are incapable to any kind of social Life . . . Nothing . . . is more true, than that the *Love of the Sex*, and the constant exercise thereof, which is the Virile Potency, is the very basis to the accession of all other kinds of *permanent Po*wers. All activity and every executive impulse is in such complete conjunction with the *Virile Power*, that they all advance step by step, and can never be separated. (35)

The sexual programme in the *Plan* is based on an informed reading of Swedenborg's tract *Deliatiae sapientiae de amore conjugiali* (1768); normally translated into English as *Conjugial Love* (the adjective "conjugial" denoting a sublime, divinely ordained love between two partners). Swedenborg's tract was a collection of guidelines for spiritual living. It deals with many practical matters regarding the relationship between man and woman, such as courtship, betrothal, jealousy, temptation, disaffection, sensuality, prudence, and courtesy. But the controversy arose from Swedenborg's evident interest in the power of the sexual as a sacral act. For this purpose, Swedenborg endorsed that men of the New Jerusalem Church – under certain circumstances – could hold concubines. At the time the *Plan* was published, Swedenborg's tract existed only in an obscure Latin edition published in Amsterdam. The suggestion of its being translated into English caused outrage and dissension among the Swedenborgians and led to the exclusion of Wadström, Nordenskjöld, Hindmarsh and others who supported the sexual doctrines.

Swedenborg's authorisation of concubinage must be seen within the larger context of his mystical theology of *conjugial love*. Rather than the traditional mystic's solitary forgetting of the body and cultivation of a passivity of mind, the mystical experience for Swedenborg could come about through the physical activity of sex. Access to the divine state of the human through "conjugial love" lies not only in the unification of minds but also "in the organs consecrated to generation" (Swedenborg, *Conjugial Love* n447, n310).[20]

Despite the dubious oral tradition that Blake "proposed to add a concubine to his household" (Wilson 72), we do not know if he took a stance in the debate, but it is clear that Blake, in the poetry produced in the early 1790s, focuses on free love as a spiritual ideal. *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* is Blake's most sustained attempt at

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[20] Robert Southey, who had studied the Swedish prophet for his semi-autobiographical *Letters from England*, wrote that Swedenborg "dilate[s] with more pleasure" on conjugality, which is what "flows from the Creator into all things; from the Creator it is received by the female, and transferred through her to the male ... it finds its way through the breast into the genital region" (387).

describing a pathology of sexual violence conjoining sexual liberation with human freedom. Here we meet the female Oothoon castigating her lover Theotormon for his "hypocrite modesty." Oothoon describes herself as "A virgin fill'd with virgin fancies"; and, in reference to the image of the virtuous woman at the time, she is barred from expressing her true sexual desires.

In what appears to be a landscape setting akin to the paradise on the coast of Africa described in the *Plan*, Oothoon describes a utopian time of free love, where she can catch girls for Theotormon and lie "on a bank & view their wanton play/ In lovely copulation bliss on bliss." This is a vision of a future when "Love! Love! Love! happy happy Love!" can be "Free as the mountain wind" (7: 16-30; Blake 50). The reference to "happy copulation" has attracted some attention, as several critics from Desirée Hirst to Morton D. Paley and E.P. Thompson have pointed to plate 7 of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* as a possible allusion to an idea of concubinage. Yet, Oothoon's vision is really no more than a wish for an end to puritanical morality that preaches female chastity. Oothoon has plucked the "bright Marygold" to "glow" between her "breasts" (1: 6-13; Blake 45-46) as a symbol of acknowledging her own sexual desire. Blake sees the submission to a code of sexual repression as what would make "Oothoon a whore indeed" and turn "all the virgin joys/ Of life" into "harlots" (6: 18-19; Blake 50).

For Blake, the paradigmatic form of oppression is sexual, and marriage out of necessity is the primary form that such sexual oppression takes. In *America*, Orc's political liberation of the thirteen states concords with a defeat of religious tyranny *and* a defeat of the sexual restraints imposed on women. The enthusiasm of liberation becomes a millennial event: "The doors of marriage are open, and the Priests in rustling scales/ Rush into reptile coverts, hiding from the fires of Orc," and "the female spirits of the dead pining in bonds of religion;/ Run from their fetters ...." (15. 19-24; Blake 57).

Though it is somewhat of an overstatement, Swinburne wrote that female emancipation "never had a more violent and

vehement preacher" (Swinburne 109). Another contender to that pulpit was Thorild, who, while resident in England, wrote two tracts of interest in respect to sexual and political liberation. One was *Harmonien; eller Allmän Plan för en Uplyst och Ägta Kärleksförening* [Harmony; or a General Plan for an Enlightened and True Union of Love], in which he praises love as divine "harmony." It was not published before 1793, after he was forced into exile in Germany. It was published in Swedish, but the Preface informs us that since it was originally written in England, its original language had been English. Unfortunately, no copy of the original manuscript survives. Although Thorild mentions Swedenborg in the tract, he does not acknowledge him as a source. Yet his doctrines about the divinity of Love are in accordance with Swedenborg. He also displays a similar alchemical influence when he writes that

> ... woman, in her being, is a reflection of all joy of life
> that exists: and no purpose in nature will contribute in a
> higher degree to a delightful harmony in a woman than
> a man, for his being is a reflection of all the strength or
> the power which enlivens the world. So that both these
> beings are for each other NATURE in miniature: and,
> in their small circle, unite all that HUMANKIND finds
> joyous and divine. (Thorild 4: 128; my translation)

We may here look to the founding member of the New Jerusalem Church, Robert Hindmarsh, who published Thorild's *True Heavenly Religion Restored* and took profound enough interest in sexual alchemy to get Hindmarsh excluded from the church. In 1792, when he defended Swedenborg against attacks published by the famous Unitarian radical Joseph Priestley, he specified that "the distinguishing characteristic of a male is *activity*; while that of a female is *re-activity*: Thus God, as an *active* Creator, is properly *male*; and the whole creation, as a *re-active* subject, is properly *female*" (Hindmarsh 232).

What gives Thorild's tract a contemporary social dimension is the fact that it was meant to be a critique of the custom of marrying for money, as Thorild makes clear in the "Preface." Throughout, a

distinction between Love as an inner "unity" and an outward "bond" is upheld. The latter is the union forged between the sexes that "the priest but not God has blessed," whereas only the former, a marriage out of Love, will assure man's happiness (Thorild 4: 123-24; my translation). This roughly follows the same lines of argument that we find in Wadström and Nordenskjöld's *Plan for a Free Community*. But it did not lead Thorild to propose an African colony or the establishment of any separatist community; instead he wants to lay the foundation for a philosophical/ scientific system that can measure what human happiness is. Once this is in place, men and women will soon realise that only a marriage based on true Love can lead to a life of sublime Harmony with the Divine Order of the Universe. Although the sexual aspect of Love is not the focus for Thorild, he does not shy away from explicitly proclaiming "desire" to be an important component in establishing a cosmic Harmony. It is not impossible that what is now available to us only in edited and tempered form was originally meant to support more clearly the faction of sexualist interpreters of Swedenborg, with whom he associated.

Another important tract is one of Thorild's best known and most often translated works, *Om qvinnokönets naturliga höghet* [On the Natural Glory of the Female Sex]. This was also written in England but not published before 1793.[21] The main thesis of the tract is bold. Not only does Thorild attack the bondage the female sex must suffer in a patriarchal society, but he goes as far as to place women above men. Thorild was undoubtedly inspired by the arguments for female emancipation he encountered in England, because it is clear, though he says nothing of women's social, political or judicial rights, that female emancipation becomes a symbol for his democratic hopes of equality for all classes of mankind. Rather than "being something else first," "Such as mere woman, child, servant, farmer, cavalier, master, prince," liberated mankind is first and foremost human. Women's liberation embodies the greater struggle against "those who deceive in the name of God, and tyrants with fire and sword, and all bloody and mad vices, in a word, the

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[21] For evidence that a version of the tract was completed and ready for publication by 1791, see editorial notes in Thorild 2: 434, 439-40.

ancient potentates Stupidity and the Lie, which have been the true rulers of the earth" (Thorild 3: 352, 354; my translation). The entire argument is subtly spiced with millennial hopes. In reference to the traditional reckoning for the Last Judgment (also used by Blake in *The French Revolution* and numerous other places throughout his writing), Thorild claims that the 6000 years of error have now come to an end.

VII.

Thorild scholars have questioned the honesty of the poet's Swedenborgianism, just as objections to Blake's actual commitment to Swedenborgian doctrine have been raised.[22] What are we to make of the *Maxims*, which was published after Thorild had left London? The publisher writes in an "Introduction" that the pamphlet has been translated "from the Swedish," and it is unclear if Thorild had the chance of proof-reading the finished translation. Did a translator or editor with a metaphysical bent twist some of Thorild's original intentions out of shape? In regards to *True Heavenly Religion Restored*, why does Thorild opt for anonymity, only identifying himself on the title-page as "A Philosopher of the North"?

Part of the explanation for Thorild's turn to Swedenborg can probably be explained by the fact that he received patronage from C.B. Wadström. From a letter, we know that Wadström helped Thorild financially, when the latter had run up a large debt (see the editorial commentaries in Thorild 9: 208). The circumstances of financial dependency could give occasion to wonder about Thorild's motives behind supporting Swedenborg in *True Heavenly Religion Restored*. But that he did, at least at one point, sympathise with Swedenborgian tenets is evident in the ultra-short essay "Svedenborg" (undated), in which the prophet is praised as a "great and knowledgeable philosopher, who has bestowed honour upon his nation" (Thorild 3: 418; my translation). In many ways, Thorild's

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[22] For a discussion of Thorild; see the editorial commentaries in Thorild 9: 147-61 and Herrlin below. For Blake paying lip-service to Swedenborgianism while undermining its theological points; see Thompson 168-69.

relationship with Wadström parallels that of Blake, in later years, with his patron, C.A. Tulk. Around 1815, Blake procured patronage from this wealthy Swedenborgian, who was son of John Tulk, one of the original founding members of the New Jerusalem Church. This meant that Blake took up Swedenborgian themes, and that he again referred to the Swedish prophet in favourable, though not unqualified terms.

Olle Herrlin, who has written of Thorild's religious views, believes that the divergences in *True Heavenly Religion Restored* can only mean that it was not written on his own accord, but must have been work commissioned by the London Swedenborgians (Herrlin 190). However, these assumptions appear to me not to represent a balanced view. The circumstances of printing may well indicate that Thorild could have received patronage for his book, but there is no reason to believe that he was "faking it." First of all, the main body of text contains many of Thorild's recognisable and already rehearsed sentiments. Secondly, *True Heavenly Religion Restored* would make a rather unsatisfactory result as a "commissioned" work, as Thorild, in the Swedenborgian appendix, spreads his sympathies rather liberally, praising the Quakers as the true followers of Jesus and hailing Mysticism as the "only idea left of true Religion." Thirdly, he spells out that "The principal Doctrines of Swedenborg are *mere Traits* of *Divine Order*" and not final truth. They are only "*clear Corollaries* of that only System conceivable above [i.e. what Thorild has outlined in the main body of his work]" (Thorild 2: 413).

Taking these facts into consideration, Thorild appears to be making an honest attempt to search out Swedenborg's writings for ideas akin to his own – much like Blake was doing in his sympathetic comments to Swedenborg's *Divine Love and Divine Wisdom*, which was probably annotated around the same time as Thorild published his tract. The constant attempt to manipulate Swedenborg's statements so they can be reconciled with his own thought, which is evident here, indicates that Blake was never fundamentally a Swedenborgian. The prophet's theology is only a starting point for seeking out deeper spiritual aspects of existence. For instance, when Swedenborg speaks of "The Negation of God" as

what "constitutes Hell," Blake rephrases it "the Negation of the Poetic Genius" (Blake 603).

By way of conclusion, it appears that both Thorild and Blake at one time found inspiration in Swedenborg's writing and allowed for points of agreement between their own philosophical convictions and those of the prophet. In neither case is there any indication that either ever fully "converted" to Swedenborgianism. The Swedenborgian J.J. Garth Wilkinson once accounted in a letter that "Blake informed Tulk that he had two different states; one in which he liked Swedenborg's writings, and one in which he disliked them" (Bentley 1977: 38). That the ageing Blake should have spoken this to his Swedenborgian patron indicates a significant ambivalence in his attitude which is not easy to solve. Just as with Thorild, Blake's Swedenborgianism must remain a vexed question.

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To Australia and back. The metaphor of return in Dickens' *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations* and Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*

JANE MATTISSON

Last sea-thing dredged by sailor
Time from Space,
Are you a drift Sargasso,
where the West
In halcyon calm rebuilds
her fatal nest?
Or Delos of a coming
Sun-God's race?
Are you for Light, and trimmed,
with oil in place,
Or but a will o' Wisp
on marshy quest?
A new demesne for Mammon
to infest?
Or lurks millenial Eden
'neath your face?

Bernard O'Dowd, 'Australia', 12 May 1900
(my italics. Quoted in John Ritchie, *Australia as once we were* 1975: 167)

Bernard O'Dowd's poem suggests a range of possible views of Australia. In this article I argue that a change in how the British Empire was perceived during the nineteenth century as a consequence of increased knowledge about the colonies is intimately connected with the possibility of return to the mother country. I concentrate on two major authors, Dickens and Hardy, focusing on *The Personal History of David*

Copperfield (published between 1849 and 1850; hereafter referred to as *David Copperfield*), *Great Expectations* (1860-61) and Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895-6). These three novels illustrate a shift in attitude to the possibility and advisability of return from Australia. I pose the question: 'Why do Dickens' characters remain in Australia, or try to return and fail, while Hardy's succeed and even prosper back in England?'

I identify three levels of knowledge about the Empire – and Australia in particular – and show how these are reflected in the three novels. In the first of the novels, *David Copperfield*, Dickens reflects the lack of knowledge of many of his contemporaries. The novel offers an idealised picture of the colonies, and there is no thought of the characters returning. In the second novel, *Great Expectations*, Australia is still steeped in mystery, and return – while possible – is doomed to failure. By the 1890s and the publication of *Jude the Obscure*, knowledge of the empire based on oral and written accounts of visitors and settlers becomes widely available and return to the mother country is a viable and sometimes advisable option.

Neither Dickens nor Hardy was particularly knowledgeable about the Empire. As I hope to show, Dickens was particularly skilful in disguising his ignorance with the aid of a variety of narrative techniques. Dickens' and Hardy's novels reflect the level of knowledge of the colonies current in the mid- and late- nineteenth century. In *Oliver Twist*, begun in 1837, there is mention of a 'distant part of the New World', a fitting place for Monks to squander his money in and where he can die a lonely death in prison. Nothing is said about the conditions under which he lives, he is simply 'far from home' (ch. 53). In *Dombey and Son*, published between 1846 and 1848, Walter Gay is sent to the West Indies, shipwrecked, and assumed drowned. The Empire is a place in which people disappear. By Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, Arabella is clearly able to account for why she and her family have returned to England. The idealised picture of the Empire current until the 1880s gradually gives way to a more balanced and realistic one – a picture which becomes incorporated into the literature of the period.

My argument is based on a particular view of human knowledge which has much in common with the views of Satya P. Mohanty:

> Human knowledge is a socially constructed knowledge of the real world; the world exists as an analyzable causal structure, and it shapes our knowledge of it. The world exists independently of our knowledge of it; it is not paradigm specific. But significant portions of it, namely, the social and cultural aspects of it, including much of the natural world, are also causally affected by our actions, our theories, and our knowledge-gathering procedures: we do not only 'discover' reality; we 'make' it as well (1997: 193).

Reading has a performative function. The method of publication of the three novels discussed here encouraged readers to create pictures of their own: the regular instalments (*Great Expectations* was published weekly and *David Copperfield* and *Jude the Obscure* on a monthly basis) were not only so designed that they stimulated curiosity and suspense – what Douglas Brooks-Davies describes as 'the best-seller technique of mystification' (1989: 9) – they also made it possible for readers to write to the author and thereby influence the story.

As Edwin Whipple, one of the early reviewers of *Great Expectations* noted, people read the novel

> as we have read all Mr Dickens's previous works, as it appeared in instalments, and can testify to the felicity with which expectation was excited and prolonged, and to the series of surprises which accompanied the unfolding of the plot of the story (*Atlantic Monthly*, September 1861. Qtd. in Brooks-Davies 1989: 9).

The fact that instalments were often read aloud to small groups ensured that episodes were discussed from a variety of perspectives and by people of different social classes and backgrounds, including those unable to read. As Rosemarie C. Sultan writes, 'Dickens was read by just about everyone, from the bottom of society to the top.'[1] The

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[1] See the section 'Readership: literacy and the reading public' in *The Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens* ed. by Paul 'Schlicke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 487-89. Sultan argues that 'Thackeray might have possessed more cachet amongst the upper classes, and there may have been sensation novels that sold more copies amongst the working classes, but no other writer commanded so widely defined and so large a general readership' (488).

weekly/monthly instalments formed an integral part of social life inside and outside the family. Truth and fiction became interwoven as readers followed the fortunes of such colourful characters as the Micawbers or Arabella. As one anonymous writer for *Fraser's Magazine* (1850) put it, 'Probably there is no single individual who, during the last fourteen years, has occupied so large a space in the thoughts of English folk as Charles Dickens.'[2] The anonymous reviewer for *Harper's Weekly* made a similar observation when s/he pointed to the eagerness with which Hardy's final novel was awaited:

> a new novel from Thomas Hardy is as eagerly awaited as one from George Eliot used to be, though with a more popular expectation than was awakened by this most thoughtful woman after she had left the field of common life so humorously and tragically represented in *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss* (8 December 1894. Review of *Jude the Obscure*. Qtd. in Laurence Lerner and John Holmstrom 1968, 104).

To understand why Dickens and Hardy portrayed the possibility of return from Australia differently it is necessary to understand how knowledge of the colonies changed during the course of the nineteenth century. Dickens was a great advocate of emigration as a means of escaping poverty or social disgrace[3] and making a new start. He actively supported Caroline Chisholm, for example, in her efforts to enable single young women to emigrate to Australia and find useful employment,[4] thereby avoiding prostitution (we immediately think of Emily and Martha in *David Copperfield*). Dickens also encouraged his own sons to emigrate to Australia.

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[2] 'Charles Dickens and *David Copperfield*,' *Fraser's Magazine* December 1850, xlii, 698-710. Reprinted in Philip Collins (ed.), *Charles Dickens. The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1971), p. 243.

[3] See, for example, 'Recycling the Poor and Fallen: Emigration Politics and the Narrative Resolutions of *Mary* Barton and David Copperfield' in Rita S. Krandis, *Imperial Objects. Essays on Victorian Women's Emigration and the Unauthorized Imperial Experience* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998), 43–63.

[4] See, for example, Russel Ward, *Australia since the coming of man* (Melbourne: The Macmillan Company of Australia, 1987), 94.

Unlike Dickens, Hardy was not personally involved in immigration issues. While there is no evidence in his letters, disguised autobiography or non-fictional publications to suggest that he had a special interest in, or knowledge about the Empire, we should nevertheless bear in mind that *Jude the Obscure* was written at a time when nearly one quarter of the world had been colonised, Rudyard Kipling had taken the literary public of London by storm with his Indian tales, G.A. Henty's books were recommended reading for children, Rider Haggard had become almost as popular as Dickens himself, Joseph Conrad had left the merchant navy to record his response to the colonial experience, and the reading public demonstrated an almost insatiable desire for stories of imperial adventure in exotic places.[5]

It is interesting to note that Hardy had an example on his own doorstep of successful immigration to Australia in the form of Tom Roberts,[6] a Dorchester man. Tom was thirteen when he emigrated with his mother in 1869. He studied art in Australia, won a scholarship to Melbourne National Gallery School, and in 1881 he studied at the Royal Academy, London. Roberts returned to Australia and became one of the first Australian impressionists. He later settled in London for twenty years, returning to Australia in 1923, where he died eight years later. It is highly likely that Hardy knew of Roberts as Dorchester was a small market town where everyone knew everyone else.[7]

Between 1815 and 1912 a staggering 212 million Britons emigrated, the majority to the U.S.A. and Canada. Between 1815 and 1840, 499,000 emigrated to Canada, 417,000 to the U.S.A. and 58,000 to Australia (Sherington 1990: 37). The work of the Land

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[5] See chapter 3, 'The "civilized" in crisis: Haggard, Conrad, and Hardy' in Daniel Bivona, *Desire and Contradiction. Imperial Visions and Domestic Debates in Victorian Literature* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), 75-112.

[6] See http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/roberts_tom.html.

[7] According to *Kelly's Directory of Dorsetshire* (London: Kelly & Co., 1889), the population of Dorsetshire in 1861 was 188,789; in 1871, 195,537 and in 1881, 191,028 . The population of Dorchester in 1889 was 7,567. The statistics are to be found on p. 1152.

and Emigrant Commission, which offered assisted passages,[8] boosted the number of British immigrants in Australia. Numbers increased annually until the late 1880s, when assisted passages were discontinued, and a depression had set in in Australia.

In considering the three levels of knowledge about the Empire presented at the beginning, one may ask: 'What did the British migrant know about conditions in Australia'? A number of books were published in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many of these, and particularly the earlier ones, gave an idealised picture of the opportunities emigration offered, and they clearly underplayed the difficulties of the settler's life. Froude's *Oceana*, for example, published in 1884, depicted the colonies as marvellous places and valuable assets to the Empire. By the 1870s, more books began to appear on the Australian continent. Edwin Carton Booth's *Australia Illustrated*, for instance, contained rosy descriptions of life in Australia and emphasised the bright prospects for emigrants. Anthony Trollope's newspaper reports painted an optimistic picture of the spacious life of wealthy station owners.

By the mid-1890s, however, it was no longer possible to write optimistic descriptions and reports on the lines of the earlier publications. A more realistic view was gradually evolving, one which reflected the changing prospects of Australia in the early 1890s as a result of severe droughts, strikes and a series of economic crises caused by a widespread reliance on insecure loans.[9] The situation had indeed become so serious that by 1899 statistics showed that departures exceeded arrivals for the first time in Australian history (Richie 1975: 167). While Dickens' novels reflect the optimism of the first and middle parts of the nineteenth century, Hardy's final novel shows how the tide had begun to turn, and how return to the mother country was not only a possibility but even a

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[8] For a discussion of how assisted passages affected British emigration to Australia, see Robert F. Haines, *Emigration and the Labouring Poor. Australian Recruitment in Britain and Ireland, 1831-1860* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1997).

[9] For an excellent discussion of the situation in Australia in the 1890s see Marjorie Barnard, *A History of Australia* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1962), ch. xvi, 'The Nineties'.

necessity for many. One may even speculate that Hardy's knowledge of Darwin's theory of survival and adaptation would have made him more sceptical than Dickens to the idea of emigrating to Australia.

Another interesting aspect of the 1890s which has a direct bearing on the fate of Arabella in *Jude the Obscure* is the change in perception of the distance between Australia and the mother country. During the 1860s, when Dickens was writing his novels, the poor communications, the dangers involved in the long sea journey, and the lack of knowledge about the true conditions prevailing in Australia created a feeling of separateness between the known world of Britain and the unknown Australian continent. This is why the Peggottys, the Micawbers, Martha, Emily and Magwitch could start again, adopt a new identity and create brand new lives for themselves in Australia. By the 1880s, however, there was a growing desire on the part of both Australia and Britain to stress the strong affiliations between both countries. An increased flow of goods and people encouraged exchange of knowledge, which gradually modified British views of Australia, and made return to the mother country not only easier but more natural. Hardy's Arabella and her family not only return with apparent ease, but are also able to describe conditions on the basis of personal experience of Melbourne. As I have argued elsewhere (*Knowledge and Survival in the Novels of Thomas Hardy* 2002: ch. 4), Arabella is a survivor. She sees emigration to Australia as a way out of her difficulties. When she realises she has made the wrong choice, nothing is more natural than to return to southern England to make a fresh start.

I should now like to take a closer look at the careers of those characters in *David Copperfield, Great Expectations* and *Jude the Obscure* who emigrate to Australia. I shall begin with the Micawbers, Emily and Martha in *David Copperfield.* They represent the first level of knowledge mentioned earlier, namely the idealised, in which Australia is a mysterious continent promising a fresh start and from which return is neither possible nor desirable; I then move on to the ex-convict Magwitch in *Great Expectations,* who represents the second level of knowledge, where return is physically possible but

undesirable due to social and legal restrictions; finally reaching the third level of knowledge, in which return is possible, desirable and natural.

Mr Micawber is intensely human and it is the comic life of the Micawber family which, in the words of Graham Storey (1991: 51), adds 'buoyancy' to the novel. Micawber is an incurable optimist. Unlike his wife, he feels sure that his financial difficulties will ultimately resolve themselves. The pawning of the family's few precious possessions, imprisonment for debt and constant harassment by local traders have no more than a temporary effect on him. Why then does he finally decide to emigrate to Australia? Interestingly, it is not Micawber's idea at all, but Aunt Betsey's. Neither Aunt Betsey nor Micawber has much knowledge of Australia – the narrator quite simply states that 'it is, under existing circumstances, the land, the only land, for [Micawber] and [his] family' (ch. 54).

Micawber has little conception of the distance between Australia and England (this may even be wilful ignorance, of course): '[i]t is no distance – comparatively speaking' (ch. 54), he says. He entertains vague notions of becoming a farmer, but clearly has no previous experience. Australia is an unknown quantity, and a last resort. At the same time, it is a new start. As Mrs Micawber observes, 'Mr Micawber is going to a distant country, expressly in order that he may be fully understood and appreciated for the first time . . . . Enough of delay: enough of disappointment: enough of limited means. That was in the old country. This is the new' (ch. 57).

Mr Micawber's vision of Australia is based on ignorance, and the reader's knowledge of the continent is certainly not increased by reading the novel. At the same time, the sympathy of the reader is excited: s/he wants him to succeed. While critics such as G.K. Chesterton have argued that Mr Micawber is imprudent and unrealistic,[10] his incorrigible optimism appeals to the reader, who hopes that Australia will offer him the chance – so long denied him in England – to succeed. As Humphry House has argued:

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[10] See *Charles Dickens* (London: Methuen, 1906), ch. XI.

> The moral of Micawber is that even in a man as fantastically as improvident and as gay about it as he, there is a secret possibility of success. . . . Micawber got the better of the prudent philosophers both on the swings and on the roundabouts. For sixty-two chapters he was saying in the very best Dickens manner, 'See how wonderful and lovable a thoroughly unthrifty and imprudent man can be,' and in the sixty-third he turned round and showed that even he could do well enough for himself when the *right thing* turned up (my italics. 85).

The 'right thing' for Mr Micawber is Australia, the proper destination for those looking for a new start. It also offers a chance of success.

Martha, Emily and the Peggotys sail on the same ship as the Micawbers. Mr Peggotty is the only one to return to England, and this for only four weeks. 'We've done nowt but prosper', he says. 'That is, in the long run. If not yesterday, why then to-day. If not to-day, why then to-morrow' (ch. 63). Farming is clearly the source of the emigrants' prosperity, but there are no details.

Of the fates of the two fallen women, Martha and Emily, it is Martha's which is the more convincing because here Dickens is able to draw on personal experience. While Emily buries herself in her work of tending the sick and teaching young children as a means of wiping out the past, Martha acknowledges and proclaims her mistakes. She insists that her future husband be told that she was a prostitute before they marry. She describes this as her 'trew story' (ch. 63). It is a story familiar to Dickens, who knew that there was a shortage of women in Australia[11] and that as a consequence many prostitutes were able to find husbands. Dickens' knowledge does not extend to conditions in Australia itself, however. He tells us nothing about the couple's lives in Australia. They conveniently disappear 'fower hundred mile away from any voices but their own and the singing birds' (ch. 63). No one can finish their story.

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[11] For useful statistics, see R.B. Madgwick, *Immigration into Eastern Australia 1788-1851* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1969), pp. 223, 227 and 230-1.

And what about Mr Micawber then? From a hard life in the bush, he has become well-to-do. *How* he became a magistrate in Port Middlebay remains a mystery. All possibility of further information is removed by the departure of Mr Peggotty. Indeed, the narrator clearly tells us not to expect any more details because Agnes and David are never to meet Mr Peggotty again.

The situation is somewhat different in *Great Expectations*, where it is possible, with the aid of clues extracted from the text, to discover important details about Magwitch's life.[12] The story spans sixteen to seventeen years. Magwitch was born in November 1760. He is arrested in 1803 for putting stolen notes into circulation (ch. 42). After being tried and sentenced to transportation he escapes but is later recaptured. He is retried in 1804 and transported to Australia for life. From our knowledge of conditions at the time, we know that the voyage would have taken approximately fifteen or sixteen weeks. This left Magwitch fifteen years in which to prosper; a realistic period borne out by historical records.

When Magwitch recounts his adventures in 'the new world' on his return to England, he emphasises the distance: 'many a thousand mile of stormy water off from this' (ch. 39), he says. The reader's imagination is stimulated, all the more because he gives few details about the source of his prosperity, observing merely that 'I've done wonderful well. There's others went out alonger me as has done well too, but no man has done nigh as well as me' (ch. 39). Magwitch knew the risk he was running by returning to England as a convicted man (there was no pardon for him in the mother country however wealthy he was). Only in Australia can his prosperity earn him respect – and ensure his safety. In England, the past will always catch up with him. Magwitch receives the death sentence. His illness in prison is the reason given for his inability to talk to Pip; instead, it

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[12] See David Paroissien, *The Companion to Great Expectations* (Mountfield: Helm Information, 2000), 423-434. My chronology is based on Paroissien's. There are several publications dealing with the convict period in Australia. For an informative discussion of the range of offences, conditions onboard convict ships and acclimitisation of convicts to life in Australia see Alexandra Hasluck, *Unwilling Emigrants. A Study of the Convict Period in Western Australia* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1969).

is Pip who is the supplier of information, telling Magwitch about the fate of his daughter, Estella. The narrator tells us that Magwitch is 'tired out' (ch. 56). His thoughts retreat into the past. Significantly, when Magwitch is retried, his crime is that of returning: 'nothing could unsay the fact that he had returned, and was there in presence of the Judge and Jury. It was impossible to try him for that, and do otherwise than find him Guilty' (ch. 56).

Once Magwitch is sentenced to death, a time limit is put on Pip's opportunity to find out more about his benefactor's life in Australia. The final exchange between Pip and Magwitch reveals that the latter is unable to speak. The secrets of his success follow him to the grave. The narrator opens up one more opportunity for Pip to tell the reader anything he may have discovered about Magwitch's life in Australia, but this is quickly closed by Joe in the penultimate chapter of the novel, as he tells Pip that such a subject is unnecessary between two such old friends (ch. 57).

No such mystery shrouds Australia in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. Arabella returns to southern England, followed later by her husband. Both are integrated into English society and able to create new lives for themselves. A number of details are given of their existence in Australia to explain why they have returned. Return is both possible and essential for survival. Emigration was an experiment which failed. *Why* did it fail, and what were the consequences for Arabella and her family?

In Part Third of the novel, Jude suddenly discovers Arabella working in a bar. We learn that the main reason why she has returned is the harsh conditions in Australia. She tells Jude, for example, that her parents had had a 'hard struggle', 'a rough time of it' (Part Fifth, ch. 3), and that her mother had subsequently died of dysentery due to the hot weather. This is a long way from the earlier, idealised pictures of Australia in general circulation.[13] By the late 1880s, there was a growing awareness of the inaccuracy of many of the earlier, glowing accounts of life in Australia given by such

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[13] See, for example, Charles H. Pearson, *National Life and Character. A Forecast* (London: Macmillan, 1893), 42.

authors as the earlier mentioned Froude.[14] How much Hardy knew is impossible to say, but we do know that he was an avid reader and frequent visitor to London, and that he was generally well-informed. What is significant in Hardy's case is not so much the extent of the detail – indeed, little detail is required for the purposes of the narrative – but the fact that he does not reproduce the earlier, unrealistic pictures of emigrant life in Australia.

Hardy's interest in Darwin's theory of adaptation and survival is an additional factor. Arabella is one of Darwin's survivors. When reality does not live up to her expectations, she acknowledges her mistake and returns to England. Improvements in communication had made this possible (the journey between Australia and England took only six weeks by the late nineteenth century, as opposed to the fifteen or sixteen during Dickens' lifetime), and new insight into the process of adaptation and survival had demonstrated the advisability of return for certain categories of emigrants. Arabella's encouragement of her husband to emigrate to England is prompted by her need for respectability and financial security. The sudden death of Cartlett suggests that it was as difficult for Australians to adapt to English conditions as it was for English emigrants to adapt to Australian ones.

The remaining chapters of the novel make no further reference to Australia. Arabella has learned her lesson and she sets about the business of making maximum use of opportunities in the mother country. As a work of fiction, *Jude the Obscure* was not intended to provide detailed information about life in Australia. Hardy stressed indeed that his novels were works of art and not social or philosophical commentaries. Nonetheless, sufficient detail is provided of Arabella's life in Australia to whet the appetite of the curious reader eager to learn more about the continent which was

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[14] See, for example, R.W. Dale's criticism of Froude in *Impressions of Australia* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889), 10-12. As early as 1873, Anthony Trollope had pointed to the problems and almost inevitable failure of female immigrants who hoped 'to earn by their talents and acquirements that bread which a too crowded market make it difficult for them to find'. See *Australia and New Zealand* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968. First published in 1873), 499.

attracting increasing attention in the books and newspapers of the time.

The three novels I have discussed here demonstrate a change in the British perception of Australia. While Dickens' novels reflect an idealised picture of conditions facing emigrants, Hardy acknowledges that return to the mother country is both possible and, in some cases, even advisable. The three levels of knowledge of the empire which I have presented in relation to *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* and *Jude the Obscure* indicate a significant advance in knowledge in the space of thirty years when it comes to the physical, social and economic conditions prevailing in Australia.

To return to a point made earlier: human knowledge is a socially constructed knowledge of the human world. We not only discover reality, but make it as well. Dickens and Hardy did more than reflect the level of knowledge about Australia at the time of writing, they helped form it in the minds of their readers. By the 1890s it was becoming increasingly clear that there was, to return to Bernard O'Dowd's poem quoted at the beginning, no 'millenial Eden' lurking beneath the face of Australia. Hardy knew that the prosperity and happiness of the Micawbers and Peggottys in the new land was not for the likes of Arabella. It is this knowledge of Australia which Hardy communicated to his readers and which his readers considered and debated between each instalment.

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Signifying Substance:
A Cultural Analysis of Early Modernist Language Practice

LENNART NYBERG

There is a striking paradox in early modernist theory and practice concerning the nature of poetic discourse. Whereas some of its major representatives argued for "natural speech" and "prose effects" in poetry, above all in reaction to what was seen as the debased and hollow post-Romantic poetic diction of their most immediate predecessors, these arguments did not signal the openness towards everyday usage that could be read into them. Rather than adopting patterns of common discourse, poets evince a harshly critical stance to it, and especially to the language of the popular mass media. In a narrative of degeneration that was typical for its time, T. E. Hulme, the *eminence grise* of the pre-World War I London intelligentsia, claimed that "One might say that images are born in poetry. They are used in prose, and finally die a long, lingering death in journalists' English. Now this process is very rapid, so that the poet must continually be creating new images, and his sincerity may be measured by the number of his images"(Hulme 1955: 75).

The critical attitude to mass culture that is to be noted in remarks like these is expressive of the "contamination anxiety" that Andreas Huyssen has identified as intrinsic to the polarization of high and popular culture in the early twentieth century. Yet, in spite of the implicit "contamination anxiety" and elitism evinced by the early modernists, poets of the period were unable to escape, whether they wanted to or not, modern mass culture in its various material manifestations. "The expressive forms of mass culture", Thomas Strychacz observes, "leave their traces in all modernist texts, if only in the work their authors must perform to exclude them"(Strychacz

1993: 8). The determinism suggested in this analysis is particularly noticeable in the approach to language, cognitively and technologically, in the early twentieth century.

In the following analysis I will try to show how the early modernist demand for substance in writing was affected by the contemporary metropolitan world of the mass-marketed word and image. My argument is that the resulting aesthetic was related to market conditions and technological means that modernist poets were quick to adopt but equally quick to disown or efface. Whereas the desired verbal substance is often to be found in the materiality of print, this circumstance is frequently displaced in the discourse of poets, through logocentric arguments, seeking the origin of poetic expression in spoken utterance, or through adoption of pre-modern signifiers like the handwritten sign or the Chinese ideogram. The most paradoxical expression of the double-bind of assimilation and displacement of mass culture phenomena is the return to antiquated printing techniques in the handcrafted productions of several limited editions of poetry in the early twentieth century. A modern offshoot of the Victorian Arts and Crafts movement, this purported return to origins was a critical response to modern mass culture at the same time as it was an important conduit to a modernist emphasis on the materiality of the signifier.

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The single most common phenomenon in language practice that the early twentieth-century London modernists attacked was "verbalism", a use of words for rhetorical purposes only and in which clear and distinct signification had disappeared. As a rule, the alleged language disorder was described as deriving from a separation between word and object, or a condition where that link had vanished altogether, leading to "rhetoric" and "abstraction". In the discourse on poetry, the exact historical provenance of this "verbal disease" (Eliot) shifted over time and depended on writer and polemical situation, but, at its most general, it tended to embrace most writing from Milton to the Romantics and, especially, the

most recent predecessors to the modernists themselves, the French Symbolists and the Aesthetic Movement in England. According to Ezra Pound, who claimed in 1915 that "for Milton and Victorianism and for the softness of the 'nineties' I have different degrees of antipathy or even contempt" (Pound 1974: 362), the Symbolists had "degraded the symbol to the status of word"(Pound 1970: 49), that is, a word insufficiently backed up by an object or referent. Although his activity as a critic still lay a few years into the future, T. S. Eliot showed that he had apprehended the current agenda when he commented in a letter to Pound on the article in which the statement on Symbolism was made: "I distrust and detest Aesthetics, when it cuts loose from the Object, and vapours in the void, but you have not done that" (Eliot 1988: 86-7).

In order to achieve the required hardness and precision in language, words had to "hover above and cling close to the things they mean" as Pound put it in 1912 (Pound 1973: 29). A recurring key word for this word-object relation was *substance*, signifying three-dimensionality in opposition to flat words with no clearcut relationship to a referent or signified. T. E. Hulme's term for such flat words were "counters" and it seems as if he was increasingly to hold the view (chronology is notoriously difficult in the case of Hulme's writing) that language in general was to be understood as a counter language with limited claims to exact referentiality. In "Cinders: A New Weltanschaung", a manuscript unpublished in his own lifetime, he stated that "World is indescribable, that is, not reducible to counters; and particularly, it is impossible to include it all under one large counter such as 'God' or 'Truth' and the other verbalisms, or the disease of the symbolic language" (Hulme 1960: 221). Statements such as this one have made critics describe Hulme as "a simple nominalist" for whom "language was totally arbitrary, pure convention, mere assigned names" (Schneidau 1969: 51), but a notable aspect of his writing is that poetry is singled out as a type of discourse which, when handled innovatively, could overcome the limitations of conventional language. In "Romanticism and Classicism", a piece which is usually recognized as late (for example in Michael Levenson's careful chronicling of "English literary

doctrine" in *A Genealogy of Modernism*), he states that poetry "is not a counter language, but a visual concrete one" (Hulme 1960: 134). This privileging of poetic discourse corresponded to his view, expressed in "Notes on Language and Style", that poetry is "always the advance guard of language" (Hulme 1955: 81), provided that each word has "an image sticking on to it, never a flat word passed over the board like a counter" (Hulme 1955: 78).

The notion of words as cognitively substantial, made solid as objects, had a notable currency in general modernist discourse on language in the first two decades of the twentieth century. It is to be found in Alfred Stieglitz's remark in *Camera Work* in 1912 that Gertrude Stein handled language as a "raw material" (Brogan 1991: 286) as well as in Eliot's observation that "Language in a healthy state presents the object, is so close to the object that the two are identified" (Eliot 1960: 149). As far as the London scene is concerned, Vincent Sherry has traced this focus on objectified, and implicitly visual, language to a strain in European thought (comprising writers and philosophers like Benda, Sorel, Le Bon, de Gourmont and Ortega y Gasset) which favoured the eye above the ear as sensory instrument for perception. According to Sherry, this set of ideas informed the aesthetics and ideology of early modernists like Hulme, Pound and Wyndham Lewis. Ultimately, the uncovering of this "European colloquy" "defies the long-prevailing faith that modernism, despite the antidemocratic politics of its major figures, affirms a poetics of colloquial music, celebrating the very sounds of common speech" (Sherry 1993: 6) and shows how "the physiology of the eye accounts both for a new literary language—a vocabulary of ultravisual immediacy—and the faculty (as they saw it) of dictatorial command" (Sherry 1993: 7).

This particular contextualisation of the favouring of the visual above the aural in modernist language philosophy is, however, complicated by a few factors. Whereas it is clear that someone like Hulme saw little value in an aurally based poetry, arguing that "new verse resembles sculpture rather than music; it appeals to the eye rather than to the ear" (Hulme 1955: 75), Pound, by Sherry's own admission, was "Not given to a single opinion on sight" (Sherry

1993: 44) and shows, throughout the period, a desire to accommodate both an aural and a visual dimension in his poetics. Accordingly, he had by 1914 developed a position that there are two different kinds of poetry, one closer to the visual arts and one closer to music. In the article "Vorticism" he stated that "There is a sort of poetry where music, sheer melody, seems as if it were just bursting into speech. There is another sort of poetry where painting or sculpture seems as if it were 'just coming over into speech'", a position that he repeated in a review of Yeats in the same year (Pound 1974: 380). In 1918 he seems to have found that contemporary poetry had become too visual when he stated in a letter to Harriet Monroe that "There has been no attention to sound for so long" and "I shall probably do some more work on sound" (Pound 1971: 127). As Sherry observes, Pound had an "extreme need to hold together the apparently contradictory standards of musical feeling and visual intelligence" (Sherry 1993: 50), a condition which Hugh Kenner has described as "a deep division in his mind" (Kenner 1997: 22).

A more serious complication of Sherry's ideological context for the emphasis on visuality in modernist theory and practice is that this emphasis extended far beyond the London scene and the authoritarian ideological profiles of some of its protagonists. It is an emphasis that cuts through boundaries of gender and politics in that it is as characteristic of Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy and William Carlos Williams as it is of Hulme, Pound and Lewis. Consequently, although I agree with Sherry that the construction in modernist criticism of poetry as predominantly aural has to be seriously queried, I think the emphasis on the visual has to be further contextualized through incorporating reference to the visual arts, to the surrounding mass culture which was both rejected and assimilated in the modernist text, and, above all, to the technologies through which the modernist text was produced.

The significance of the visual arts to poetic practice at the time has been thoroughly dealt with in previous criticism and need not detain us here. Less attention has been paid to the culture that served as a context to both art forms, a metropolitan culture which

had turned abruptly visual in the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. The modernist breakthrough in the arts, like the philosophical and critical commentary which stuffed it with ideas, was, as Raymond Williams has noted, a metropolitan phenomenon, in which artists and critics, of whom many were immigrants, encountered "a novel and dynamic common environment from which many of the older forms were obviously distant" and in which "the artists and writers and thinkers of this phase found the only community available to them: a community of the medium; of their own practices" (Williams 1989: 45). The most common medial element in this environment was the mass-produced word and image which, through "Tube Posters, Magazine Covers, Advertisement and Commercial Art generally" as Wyndham Lewis put it in the second issue of *BLAST* in 1915 (*BLAST II* 1981: 47), showed its persuasive power. So inundated with the image had this world become that the perceiving subject could be seen to be in danger. Hillel Schwartz, observing that the "visual field was becoming as cluttered as a late Victorian parlor, as busy as a Wild West circus, as illusive as stereoptic pictures", states that "The irritable eye could be but a metonym of a sensational fatigue. Neurasthenia became a defensive act of drastic, selective inattention" (Schwartz 1986: 71).

It has been common to believe, not least because of statements of the artists themselves, that the new movements in the arts took off in scorn for the cheapness and vulgarity allegedly intrinsic to this new visual culture, and it is, indeed, an easy task to find an aggressively critical attitude not least to advertising in modernist writing. What is missed in this reckoning, however, is the extent to which the arts and the commentary surrounding them were infiltrated by the new visual culture and its modes of operation. Artists were in fact both fascinated and disgusted with it, obsessively and explicitly rejecting it but implicitly assimilating it or being assimilated by it. In the first issue of *BLAST* in 1914, Wyndham Lewis neatly summarized the paradoxical relationship to mass culture when stating that "the condition of our enjoyment of

vulgarity, discord, cheapness or noise is an unimpaired and keen disgust with it" (*BLAST I* 1981: 145).

Lewis, especially, would be prone to integrate elements of the visual mass culture as imagery in his writing, as in the following two passages from *The Enemy of the Stars*, first published in the first issue of *BLAST*: "Immense bleak advertisement of God, it crushed with wild emptiness the street" and "He repeated his name—like sinister word invented to launch a new Soap, in gigantic advertisement— toilet-necessity, he, to scrub the soul" (*BLAST I* 1981: 64 and 80). Like Lewis, Ezra Pound could be sarcastic about soap advertisements, as in his imagist admonition to "Consider the way of the scientists rather than the way of an advertising agent for a new soap" (Pound 1974: 6), a statement which is richly ironic; the well-known Pears's Soap ad, featuring Millais' painting "Bubbles", encapsulated almost everything the new artists rebelled against— Victorian values, sentimentality, commercialism—but the appeal to science was, on the other hand, one of the most common sales arguments in advertisements at the time. In her study of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century advertising, Lori Anne Loeb observes that "Innovation was an important selling mechanism.... While established products emphasized their improvement through 'scientific process', new products stressed their scientific origin" (Loeb 1994: 10). The function of the appeal to science, in the case of the mundane products for which it was used in advertising as well as, I would like to suggest, in the case of Pound's launching of a new poetic, "was to give them an almost magical aura" (Loeb 1994: 53).

Both Lewis and Pound found elements to emulate in the art of advertising and commercial print. In the second issue of *BLAST* Lewis observed, when commenting on work of "The London Group", that "The line of colour exploited is the cold, effective, between-colours of modern Advertising art. The beauty of many Tube-posters—at least when seen together, and when organized by a curious mind—is a late discovery" (*BLAST II* 1981: 77) and Pound was quite open about the commercial nature of his campaign for "imagism": "I have mucked in the filthy matter for the sake of a few young writers who need money and that oblique means to it,

reputation" as he put in a letter to Harriet Monroe in 1914 (Pound 1971: 35-6). Moreover, the way in which a term such as "imagism" had in fact taken on the character, if not the legal status, of a trademark is noticeable in the exchange between Pound and Amy Lowell, when the latter, in the view of Pound, had hi-jacked the term. "It stands", Pound stated, but quickly had to rephrase that into "*I should like it to stand* for hard light, clear edges"(Pound 1971: 38; emphasis added). Later, in his 1915 article "Affirmations, as for Imagisme", he commented: "Having omitted to copyright the word at its birth I cannot prevent its misuse" (Pound 1973: 344). Thus, although Pound was repeatedly critical of "the present advertising system" (Pound 1973: 380), it can be argued that his notion that, as he put it in a letter to Harriet Monroe in 1913, "in the end the greasy vulgus will be directed by us" (Pound 1971: 16) has to be contextualized not only by a philosophical framework which encouraged the "faculty (as they saw it) of dictatorial command" (Sherry 1993: 7) but by the modes of persuasion so visibly present in contemporary advertising.

It is doubtful, however, that the massive presence of visual culture and the bias towards visuality in contemporary aesthetic perception would have led to an exploration of visuality in writing if it had not been linked to the change in the technology of writing that was taking place at the same time. The authors appearing after the turn of the century were the first authors to use the typewriter for original production. Although the new technology was not adopted by everyone (Ford Madox Ford's manuscripts had to be sent to a typist by Pound) it is notable that the poets to have the starkest effects on modern poetics—Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams—were all using the typewriter before the First World War and Pound, characteristically, was quick to keep up with the state of the art. When Yeats redistributed an award of $200 to him, he invested part of this money in "a new typewriter of great delicacy" (Pound 1971: 28), quite possibly the new kind of portable typewriter, "the petite folding Corona", which had been on the market since 1910. The major consequence of this technological change was that original composition appeared as print even at its

point of origin. Pound not only used a typewriter at an early stage but was quick to utilise it for producing effects of spacing and line distribution that he conceived of as projecting sound and time values but which where spatial and sculptural in appearance. Such effects are to be seen in the Arnaut Daniel translation in the fifth article (published in the *New Age* on December 28, 1911) of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris",

> I'll make a song   with exquisite
> Clear words, for buds are blowing sweet

in "The Return", published for the first time in *The English Review* in June 1912 and about which E. E. Cummings stated that the greatest effect it had on him was produced by "the inaudible poem—the visual poem, the poem for not ears but eye" (Kennedy 1980: 106) and in the first publication of the well-known "In A Station of the Metro" (*Poetry*, April 1913) where the even and non-conventionally long spacing isolates the signifiers into visual image units (it is to be noted that these typographical peculiarities are to be found only in the original printings, now conveniently republished in *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose: Contributions to Periodicals*):

> The apparition   of these faces   in the crowd :
> Petals   on a wet, black   bough .

When commenting to Harriet Monroe on another poem, "The Garret", in the same issue of *Poetry*, Pound may have made one of the most significant statements for twentieth-century poetics: "… I believe I was careful to type it as I wanted it written, i.e., as to line and breaking *and capitals*" (Pound 1971: 17; emphasis in the original).

In his study of *The Aesthetics of Visual Poetry 1914-1928* Willard Bohn expresses doubt about the significance of the typewriter for visual poetry in early modernism when stating that "in fact it had little or no impact on the movement. Almost without exception the early poems were drafted as handwritten manuscripts"

(Bohn 1986: 3). The reason for this argument is that Bohn is unnecessarily restrictive in his selection of poets representing visual poetry, focussing on poetry (like that of Apollinaire and other conduits to what was to become known as concrete poetry) which utilised iconographic effects that *could not* be produced on the typewriter. Given Bohn's wide definition of visual poetry "as poetry meant to be seen" (Bohn 1986: 2), it can be argued that virtually all the poetry produced within modernism had this intention and capitalised on the available technology, whether through the typewriter or the various fonts, type sizes and iconographical arrangements that were being explored in contemporary mass-produced print. It seems obvious that Pound wanted his "In a Station of the Metro" to be seen (why would he otherwise have wanted it produced in that unconventional fashion?) and occasionally the visual aesthetic was pointedly expressed to the public, as when the December 1917 issue of the literary journal *Others*, edited by Alfred Kreymborg with the assistance of William Carlos Williams and including among other items Wallace Stevens's "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (a poem not usually recognized as a visual poem), was designated as "A number for the Mind's eye/Not to be read aloud" (Brogan 1991: 12).

A consequence of the twin impulses of a visual aesthetic and a technology with which to produce it was that one further nuance can be seen to be added to the concept of *substance* in the word and in writing. A word could be made substantial through a perceived closeness or identification between word and object but also by the very materiality of its printed manifestation. The sudden possibilities of a varied printed texture mobilised the conception of the printed word as *a signifying substance* of a cognitive status similar to that of paint or clay, an association desired by many writers at the time. No other writer was to take this conception as far as Gertrude Stein who was singled out as a "Post-Impressionist" in writing in 1912 (Brogan 1996: 286).Yet, in one of the many paradoxes riddling modernist conceptions of the poetic text, Stein neither explored typographic visuality in her work, nor, for that matter, construed writing as spoken in origin. In the first of numerous subsequent "How to Read

Gertrude Stein" essays, Carl Van Vechten in the August 1914 issue of *The Trend* claimed that "once in answer to a question Miss Stein asserted that her art was for the printed page only" (Simon 1994: 42) but Stein never composed directly for the printed page or utilised print self-reflexively. On the contrary, Stein's text, although it might convey the impression of self-reflexively turning back upon itself as printed matter, actually reflects back on the original site of composition and its private context. Through meticulous archival studies, Ulla Dydo has disclosed how a Stein piece usually originated in small *carnets* where notes for composition shared space with "letter drafts, shopping lists, guest lists, addresses and telephone numbers, doodles and small drawings, drafts of dedications for books, titles, calculations of income and expenditures, contents for proposed volumes, notes and poems to Alice Toklas, and book lists" (Dydo 1988: 86), later to be transcribed into the *cahiers* and eventually handed over to Toklas for typing, each step chiselling away the extraneous material. In a sense, it could also be said to be a manner of composition at one remove further away from the public sphere of the market than that of, for example, Pound. Where Pound's writing almost at its point of origin has the character of official statement, that of Stein gradually emerges out of a privately enclosed world, a fact which is of course highly significant from a gender perspective.

The absence of apparent typographical self-reflexivity in Stein—joined initially with her own stated lack of concern with the printed appearance of her work ("He can do me as cheaply and as simply as he likes but I would like to be done" (Stein 1986: 53), as she said about a putative publisher)—could make Stein's work seem unmarked for medium and an extreme contrast to that of E. E. Cummings, the typographically most self-reflexive of twentieth-century Anglophone poets. As much a junior as Stein was a senior to the other modernist company, Cummings had started to explore his characteristic style in 1916-1917 (Kennedy 1980: 106) although his first printed poems were to appear at first in 1920. This was a style for which, as Bohn also admits, the typewriter was of crucial significance. As already noted, Cummings was impelled

towards a visual poetic by the physical appearance of an early poem by Pound and at an early stage formulated his approach when stating that "The day of the spoken lyric is past. The poem which has at last taken its place does not sing itself; it builds itself, three dimensionally, gradually, subtly, in the consciousness of the experimenter" (Kennedy 1980: 128).

Stein and Cummings could be seen, as they usually are, as extreme examples of Anglo-American poetry from the early twentieth-century period, but the crucial question, to which my argument is heading, is whether they should be seen as qualitatively different from poets like Pound, H.D., Eliot and Williams in their handling of the word as a material signifier, especially when the resulting text is considered rather than the stated aesthetic which underpinned it. Although Pound, for example, construed some his typographical departures from convention as based on a metrical argument, as when he defended the written "line and breaking and capitals" in the letter to Monroe quoted above by saying that "I'm deluded enough to think there is a rhythmic system in the d— stuff..." (Pound 1971: 17), the resulting text relied for its effect on the shape and distribution of the printed texture. As is well known, Pound's work would, in *The Cantos*, become increasingly dependent on typographical appearance and, arguably, as self-referential, in its esoteric system of allusions and ideograms, as any text by Stein or Cummings. The true difference, I would like to argue, is rather to be found in the circumstance that Stein and Cummings offered less resistance than other writers to the conception of their texts as materially bonded and, as a consequence, to the understanding of them as bonded to the material culture without which they would be inconceivable. As we have already seen, Stein's literary texts emerged out of the jottings of a daily material life, making them, as Michael Davidson has observed, "as immediate as childhood rhymes or shopping lists (and therefore just as easy to dismiss)" (Davidson 1997: 40). Cummings, similarly, saw his poems as part of an ordinary, mundane and material culture when he stated, in the "Foreword" to his 1926 collection *is5* that "It is with roses and locomotives (not to mention acrobats Spring electricity Coney

Island the 4th of July the eyes of mice and Niagara Falls) that my 'poems' are competing" (Cummings 1991: 221).

The majority of the modernist poets, in contrast, were markedly uneasy about the associations of a material mass culture that their own interest in materiality brought with it, and the critical reception of them has followed suit in effacing the materiality of the signifier and, consequently, the material culture of its historical site. In the Anglo-American sphere, the awareness and uneasiness about the materialising of the signifier in modernist discourse can be traced at least to Yeats. Having established his reputation on a post-romantic ideal of the poet as bard and singer, he indicated, already in the 1893 collection *The Rose*, that the status of the poetic word was going through a social and cognitive change. As in most of his poetry, Yeats here introduces the thematic focus of the collection by positing poetic utterance as song—"*Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days!/Come near me, while I sing the ancient ways*" (Yeats 1952: 35)—but when he reaches the concluding poem it is in the awareness of the fact, and in apology for it, that his poetry is a written artefact and not song. Wishing to be accounted a "*True brother of a company/That sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong*", he asks to be seen as not "*any less of them/Because the red-rose-bordered hem/Of her, whose history began/Before God made the angelic clan,/Trails all about the written page*" (Yeats 1952: 56). Although Yeats was never to let go of the construction of poetry as song, the awareness of the status of his work as written and material would have significant consequences for his handling of it. Starting with the 1904 collection *In the Seven Woods* he was to adopt the aesthetics and technology of pre-industrial printing technique, which, paradoxically, can be seen as a gesture of rejection of modernity at the same time as it is an early example of a modernist highlighting of the material signifier. In a recent study of the publication history of the volume, the first to be published by the Yeats family venture Dun Emer Press, David Holdeman argues that *In the Seven Woods*, like other Yeats volumes printed in the same manner, "are modernist in their own rights. Rejecting aestheticism's evasions of tangible realities, they give direct treatment to materiality"

(Holdeman 1997: 22) and "By calling attention to its status as a book—as a written artefact prepared for a small elite to read individually—the volume's bibliographical codes pull against the celebration of oral, popular traditions…"(Holdeman 1997: 81).

Pound, a close associate of Yeats for a few years in the early century, was, as we have already seen, profoundly divided in his stance towards the word in poetic discourse. Although concerned to secure a musical and oral construction of the word, his poetics moved insistently towards a materialising of the signifier, especially as of his adoption of the Chinese ideogram as an ideal for poetic image construction. As is well known, Pound, through his study of Fenollosa, came to see the ideogram as a model for the poetic image in its juxtaposition of elements. The theory was based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the ideogram as verbal signifier (in spite of its pictorial origin it is as arbitrary in relation to meaning as words in other languages) but it was to lead Pound onwards in his project to escape abstraction and establish a concrete poetic language. Through loading the material sign of the ideogram with the conceptual weight of precise image and idea, Pound opened the way for valorising the printed manifestation of the "luminous detail" that his new method in scholarship had identified as empirical substance. In effect, this meant a valorising of print and the technology which had made this approach to poetic creation possible, but, significantly and tellingly, this move from sound to print is occluded by its recourse to pre-modern technology. Just as in the case of Yeats's transition from fin-de-siecle aestheticism to early twentieth-century modernism with *In the Seven Woods* in 1904, which was effected through a return to Renaissance hand-crafted printing technique, Pound hides the traces of the materialising of the signifier through disowning the technology he had come to rely on.

Where Yeats and Pound handled the "contamination anxiety" produced by modern material culture through displacing it to pre-modern technologies, T. S. Eliot would exhibit a more openly expressed revulsion to print and a desire to separate the self from its printed manifestations, most notably through the impersonality

doctrine which, I think incorrectly, has been generalized into a widely shared modernist dictum. It served to rationalize circumstances that were closely tied to Eliot's own situation and gradual assumption of the role as most important modernist critic and poet, a process that runs in parallel with his growing unease about the material nature of his work. Although he, as we have seen, would take over some of the "verbalist" criticisms of Pound and Hulme in demanding word-object referentiality, he had, as Michael Levenson has pointed out, "passed through no imagist phase" (Levenson 1984: 158) and there is a comparatively smaller degree of pictorialism in his work and a greater reliance on spoken utterance. His early poem "Portrait of Lady", appealing to visuality in its title, differs interestingly from Pound's and William Carlos Williams's' contemporaneous and similarly titled poems in his notable use of dialogue and a non-visual style. Eliot criticism has also tended to point to this element of the aural in the poetry. *The Waste Land*— the typographically most adventurous of Eliot's poems—has, for example, been described by Dennis Brown as aiming "to get behind written narrative altogether…to the shared world of essentially oral culture: the realm, not of writing, but of myth, ritual and even dance" (Brown 1990:102).

If Eliot's poetry is construed as not relying on the objectification of the signifier this can be traced to a higher degree of language scepticism than evinced by, for example, Pound and be seen as congruent with one of the extremes of Hulme's position. Where Pound adopted the realist stance, imagining word-object correlation to be ideally possible, Eliot at an early stage seemed inclined towards the nominalism of Hulme's chessboard-cinder projection, where language and its object are necessarily separate and impossible to fully align. As a consequence, Eliot's poetic style would tend more to syntactical patterns than the word-based poetry of Pound, and correspond to his critical advocacy for a "rhetoric of substance" rather than the word of substance in Pound's critical parlance. Ultimately it would also lead seamlessly on to the contrast between a transcendent Word and a failing, mundane language in his later Christian poetry, the words that "strain,/Crack and sometimes

break, under the burden,/Under the tension, slip, slide, perish" in the last section of *Burnt Norton*.

However, Eliot's engagement with the signifier offers a variation on the relation between the word and materiality. Where writers like Pound, Lewis, Williams and Stein, in spite of occasional disparaging remarks about the market, could indulge in the possibilities of print, Eliot at an early stage displays a more distanced and reserved attitude, visible in his strong tendency of separating his own person from the work produced, a desire which, in his case, seems to arise out of an acute need. Here, the "contamination anxiety" caused by a surrounding material culture seems to overlap with an "invasion anxiety" that becomes gradually apparent as he establishes his position as "the best living critic, as well as the best living poet, in England", as he put it in a letter to his mother (Eliot 1988: 280). 1919 was a crucial year for the intersection of these processes. Having two separate volumes in print of a fairly limited poetic output, and preparing for a third, while continuously publishing essays and reviews in the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *Athenaeum*, he had reasons to start thinking of himself as important in the literary sphere at the same time as he was beginning to find his actual material circumstances harder to bear and requiring delimitation. Whereas in 1914, as a newcomer to London, he had compared the metropolis favourably to Oxford and found "it quite possible to work in this atmosphere" (Eliot 1988: 55), he now felt that "the *immediate* neighbourhood and some of our neighbours, are not what we should like. It is rather noisy" and "The gregariousness of the life appals me" (Eliot 1988: 282 and 310). The class bias suggested in these remarks is confirmed by his attitude to the publications and audience he had started to cultivate. *The Athenaeum*, from which he had received an offer to become assistant editor (which he was to reject), was "the only weekly that I should care to be associated with" (Eliot 1988: 286), especially as this would give him credit "among the people who count". What we find here is the initiation of a process that Leonard Diepeveen has identified as Eliot's "construction of his audience", a process which targeted an "elite audience" and encouraged the readers to "think of themselves more as

individuals than as part of a mass audience, and certainly not as parts of the general reading public" (Diepeveen 1996: 47).

A part of this process of delimitation was the conception of print as necessarily unsatisfactory. When starting out as a critic in 1916 he observed to Aiken that "Composing on the typewriter, I find that I am sloughing off all my long sentences which I used to dote upon. Short, staccato, like modern French prose. The typewriter makes for lucidity, but I am not sure it encourages subtlety" (Eliot 1988: 144) and a couple of weeks later he described to his mother how he saw his new line of work ("I am learning something of the ins and outs of journalism") as enmeshed in a network of market relations: "These short notices are invaluable to the publishers, as they get from them all the little phrases, such as 'enthralling', 'good workmanship', 'a book of wide appeal', et cetera, which, with the name of a good newspaper after them, constitutes an important part of advertisement" (Eliot 1988: 149). By 1919 this fairly sanguine, if disillusioned, view was being infiltrated by more nauseated overtones when he described his "furiously laboured articles" to Mary Hutchinson: "...you don't know how crude and undigested and undigestible they often seem to me when I see them in print" (Eliot 1988: 302). By this stage print had started to become associated, to his cognition, with waste, mass culture and women; having observed to Pound in 1917 that "too many women...lowers the tone" (Eliot 1988: 198), he described his work as an editor of *The Egoist* to his father by saying that "I struggle to keep the writing as much as possible in Male hands, as I distrust the Feminine in literature, and also, once a woman has had anything printed in your paper, it is very difficult to make her see why you should not print everything she sends in" (Eliot 1988: 204).

The most apparent basic pattern to Eliot's considerations on his writing and print is a persistent desire to escape materiality or to conceive of the object as always beyond or unrecoverable by the material signifier. From this perspective, his early poetry, and especially *The Waste Land*, could be seen as progressive stages in a process of exorcism, through which materiality and the culture associated with it could be detached from the self and consigned to

the page. The impersonality doctrine of his poetics, expressed in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (originally published in *The Egoist* in September 1919) as "a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (Eliot 1960: 52), can in this respect be interpreted as a more fundamental separation complex, through which the integrity of the self could be safeguarded through detaching the material circumstances that threaten it. In a 1917 letter to Robert Nichols he intimated something of this process when suggesting that "the best promise for continuity is for one to be able to forget, in a way, what one has written already; to be able to detach it completely from one's present self and begin quite afresh, with only the technical experience preserved. This struggle to preserve the advantages of practice and at the same time to defecate the emotions one has expressed already is one of the hardest I know" (Eliot 1988: 191).

Eliot's ascetic desire to escape materiality exhibits one extreme in a spectrum of responses to a material culture of social and commercial relations that had become an inescapable contextual aspect of the word in the two first decades of the twentieth century. Although this context made for the most explosively innovative period in the history of the printed signifier, many writers expressed a similar escapism by construing the signifier as something else than its material self, pointing to an immaterial oral presence or transcendent reality, or as relieved of its modernity, and consequent association with mass culture, through recourse to pre-modern printing or writing technologies. Two consequences can be traced as results of this assimilation-detachment pattern. One was the development of a self-contained, self-reflexive poetic discourse which, as a signifying substance, marked paper space but failed to signify beyond it. Another was the development of a critical discourse on poetry which effaced the materiality of the poetic text which had been established by writers, and which, in so doing, de-historicized it into immaterial and universal presence.

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The Text that Self-Destructs: Narrative Complexity in William Trevor's *Fools of Fortune*

ULF DANTANUS

Preamble

Something happened to William Trevor's novelistic fiction between 1976 and 1980. Rather like Richard Rogers's and Renzo Piano's revolutionary *Centre Pompidou* in Paris (inaugurated in 1977), the plumbing and wiring of previously internal functions were for the first time exhibited on the outside of the structure. In *The Children of Dynmouth* (1976), like all his previous novels, Trevor used straightforward sequencing of (always numbered) episodes to organise and relay his narration to the reader. In *Other People's Worlds* (1980) a formal inventory of en-titled sections is introduced in a table of contents. This overall architecture is imposed externally to reflect the attempted structural and thematic unity of authorial design internally.

The presence or absence of a table of contents in a work of fiction may not in itself elicit much interest or enquiry from a modern reader. In the case of William Trevor, however, there are at least two areas where an investigation into the relationship between a novel and its constituent parts as shown in a table of contents may prove fruitful: (1) along the boundary between his short stories and his novels in general, and (2), in particular, in the specific instance of *Fools of Fortune* (1983), where a structural fault-line produces the kind of text that I shall call 'self-destructive prose'.

Like the total novel itself, a table of contents assumes an author addressing a reader. It signals and advertises a particular structural relationship between the internal story or stories told in the novel and the way this is telegraphed to the reader via the chapter headings. It builds, in a very basic and simple way, a structural context for the text. The specific narrative function of the address may, of course, vary from case to case. In *Other People's Worlds*, for instance, the table of contents reflects the perspective or point of view of the main characters, sometimes correlated to the relative degree of their involvement in 'other people's worlds': "Julia," "Julia in Francis's" and "Doris in Julia's" are three of the chapter headings in this novel. In narratological terms, however, since the story in this novel is told in a basically univocal way in the third person, they offer little complexity or sophistication. In *The Silence in the Garden* (1988) the chapter headings ("Sarah Arrives," "Villana's Wedding," "Carriglas in Autumn," for instance) play a more straightforward, traditional, summarising, and narratively descriptive role. What you see is what you get. In these two novels there is a stable and transparent relationship between the story and the table of contents. But, as Gérard Genette has pointed out, the relationship between these 'paratexts' (in this instance, the chapter headings and the table of contents) and the literary text or even between the 'paratexts' themselves is not always limpid or explicit. Genette believes that "[l]e meilleur intertitre, le meillleur titre en général, est peut-être celui qui sait aussi se faire oublier" (Genette 1987:291). In *Fools of Fortune* there is more in the table of contents than meets the eye. Here the chapter headings are more difficult to forget. They draw attention to themselves, and seem instead to deliberately hide a more complex narratological structure behind the simple sequence of main characters ("Willie," "Marianne," "Imelda"), neatly reprised in the same order to make up six separate parts. The relationship between the table of contents and the narrative and its narrators is much more complex and fluid. A close examination of this relationship may help us discover some fundamental features of Trevor's narrative

technique and move us towards an understanding of 'self-destructive prose' in *Fools of Fortune*.[1]

Trevor as storyteller

Critical interest in Trevor's work has always been based largely on thematic exploration and on traditional considerations of plot, character and setting, on, in short, Trevor's reputation as a popular storyteller. As late as 1996, Michael W. Thomas had reason to complain that "despite his extensive career, Trevor has yet to attract substantial critical attention" (25). Only very rarely has more serious interest been shown in Trevor's narrative strategies and a more meticulous critical approach applied, and, in broad terms, Thomas's statement still holds true today. In the most recent major contribution to Trevor studies, Dolores MacKenna's detailed and exhaustive *William Trevor: The Writer and His Work* (1999*)*, the author has many perceptive things to say about Trevor's narrative, but the study is still dominated by a biographical-thematic approach.

The general critical consensus on Trevor's career as a writer is that it is in the medium of the short story that he has been most successful. Seamus Deane, writing in the mid-eighties, suggested that it is "as a short-story writer that he is most distinguished" (Deane 226). The same view has been expressed many times: "This Irish storyteller and ex-sculptor of nearly 17 years considers his short stories his most important art, and most critics see the short story form as best suited to Trevor's genius" (Morrow Paulson xi). Christina Hunt Mahony places the novels and stories side by side and comes out in favour of the latter: "Trevor's novels have attracted notice throughout the Anglophone world, and have been translated

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[1.] It is intriguing to discover that Trevor's novelistic tables of contents appear only in these three novels in the 1980's. None of his subsequent novels *(Felicia's Journey,* 1994, *Death in Summer,* 1998, *The Story of Lucy Gault,* 2002) have a table of contents. It may be tempting, therefore, to attach special importance to this decade as a period in which Trevor somehow, to use a vague literary critical term, 'experimented' with the structure of his novels. This idea, however, does not form part of the purpose of this paper.

broadly. It is the short story, however, that may be his true metier" (Hunt Mahony 202).

Reviewers and critics have often emphasised the traditional characteristics of the short story in praising Trevor's work, its reticence and understatement, its ambiguous implication, its low-key but rich suggestiveness. The short story is an ideal vehicle for "the artist of the glimpse" (Shakespeare 201), who projects a deliberately small-scale, muted and unhurried image in time and space rather than the more extensive and flexible canvas of the novel. There are some basic generic differences in narrative strategy between the short story and the novel and these must always inform any comparison between the two. Only in terms of a purely thematic investigation can the short stories and the novels of one and the same writer be usefully studied together. In the case of Trevor, there are some very intriguing relations between the work of the short story writer and the novelist and in order to understand the differences between them we need to examine the way the meaning of a text is determined by its communicative functions

As we have already seen, Trevor himself has clearly indicated that his personal affinity lies with the short story rather than with the novel. "I certainly feel more at home myself with the short story. I think my stories are better than my novels" (Ardagh 242). Complaints have sometimes been made against his novels. It has been suggested that Trevor is "a poet of brief fictions," that his novels are "overpopulated" and that characterisation in the novels is less surefooted than in the short stories (qtd in Morrow Paulson xix-xx). Another complaint, more pertinent to an investigation into features of narrative technique, is that the novels have tended to be "essentially episodic" in construction (MacKenna 1990: 112). In *Fools of Fortune* the long sequence describing Willie's experiences at boarding-school may at best be seen to have only a very precarious relevance for the overall theme or plot. Gregory Schirmer suggests that this section of the novel is "slightly self-indulgent" (Schirmer 154), and Christopher Driver points out that "perhaps these episodes [he also includes the part about Marianne at the finishing school in Switzerland], short or long, would fit another book as

easily as this one" (Driver 22). As if to illustrate the opposite perspective and to remind us that there are genuine and pressing reasons for looking into the space between Trevor's novels and short fictions, the novelist John Fowles intimated in a review that the title story of the collection *The News from Ireland and Other Stories* should have been written as a novel instead (Fowles 90).

These observations may to some extent be a reflection of a structural dilemma facing Trevor the novelist, and they may, in particular, mirror the rather complex genesis of *Fools of Fortune* as a novel. According to Trevor himself "it started as a short story, then he wrote vast amounts that he later cut" (Hebert 10). The original short story was published in 1981 in the *Atlantic Monthly* under the title "Saints." It has never been reprinted in any of Trevor's collections of stories. One reason might be that it is not a particularly good example of Trevor's art. The story is rather top-heavy with red herrings and loose ends, and he is, here and there, guilty of some embarrassing overwriting. The reason for the main character's exile is a mystery with which the narrator unnecessarily teases the reader. The first-person narrative soon reveals a self-indulgent and perversely obsessive narrator, who is far removed from the character of Willie Quinton in the finished novel. Today the story is in fact best treated as a work-in-progress for the novel. Once incorporated into *Fools of Fortune,* "Saints" as fictional material became redundant and lost its intrinsic relevance. It was rigorously and expertly pruned by Trevor before it was slotted into place in *Fools of Fortune.*[2]

But "Saints" may still serve the useful purpose of illustrating how 'short' stories help Trevor grow the narrative structure of his novels. It happens as a logical consequence of Trevor's natural inclination as a writer and storyteller. His novels are, he has suggested, "groups of short stories worked together" (Hebert 10). MacKenna argues that this is Trevor's preferred technique:

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[2] "Saints" contains very approximately 7,500 words, whereas the corresponding section in the novel (Willie's second monologue) is a mere 2,000 words long. (Some small fragments of "Saints" are also worked into Willie's long first monologue.)

"Whether the finished product is a story, a drama or a novel, it is first written as a short story" (MacKenna 1990: 111). She describes *Other People's Worlds*, the novel that immediately preceded *Fools of Fortune*, as "a novel which encompasses a series of short stories" (112). Inevitably, this method of work may create the "episodic" effect referred to above. It must be seen as a potentially serious structural problem in all Trevor's novels. Reviewing *Fools of Fortune* in 1984, Michael Gorra found that the novel "reads as if it were a summation, almost a codification, of the themes, characters, and situations with which [Trevor] has worked in his short fiction over the last twenty years" (Gorra 158). Fourteen years later, John Updike felt it necessary to introduce a negative note relevant to our discussion in his review of *Death in Summer*. After generously praising the short stories, Updike pinpoints a similar structural dilemma: "At novel length, however, his gifts of concision and implication produce a certain feeling of disjointedness and overload" (Updike 4).

It is obvious that as a practitioner of both genres Trevor has always been acutely aware of the differences between them. "Novels tell all," he has said, "[s]hort stories tell as little as they dare" (qtd in Stinson 24). When 'working his short stories together' into the novel that became *Fools of Fortune*, Trevor was faced with the problem of finding the right balance between these two extremes. The solution he came up with produced a mixed and very varied approach to narrative structure. *Fools of Fortune* is, MacKenna has suggested, "technically Trevor's most ambitious work" (1990: 112). At times, short story fashion, it leaves minute hints for the reader to assemble, and at other times, like a novel, it tells (more or less) all.

The historical overviews

Fools of Fortune contains two narrative units that are in a very obvious way divorced (in a narratological sense) from the rest of the novel and at the same time thematically married to it. These are the parts that hold the balance of narrative power in a novel made up of different short stories. The first part is a page and a half long and

comes at the very beginning of the novel, the second less than half a page (one paragraph consisting of thirteen lines) approximately half way through it. These 'historical overviews' (as I shall call them) are placed at the very beginning of each of the two long parts that dominate the novel, entitled "Willie" and "Marianne," respectively, and although their separate existence and specific properties may be deliberately hidden by their formal absence from the table of contents, the presence of these peculiarly distinctive units is clearly noticeable in the narrative structure of the novel. Indeed they are so obvious that it seems that some commentators have failed to take account of them. Many critics have tended not to deal with them at all, whereas some refer to these passages as if they were an integral part of the two sections that they introduce. These two narrative units are, as I have suggested above, part of the *thematic* configuration of the novel, but, from a *narrative-structural* perspective, it is their separateness and uniqueness that strike us most forcibly. Nothing even remotely like them exists anywhere else in Trevor's novels.

Many commentators show their confusion about the problematic nature and function of these overviews in the narrative structure of the novel by their incomplete, imprecise and even incorrect references to them. One critic states that "[t]he book is divided into separate sections attributed to Willie, Marianne, and Imelda, and with the exception of Imelda's brief narrative, they are written in the first person . . ." (Schirmer 153). He also refers to "the tranquillity of the opening pages of the novel, describing Willie's memories of Kilneagh" (Schirmer 151), whereas, as I have indicated above, the first page and a half actually contain the first historical overview. Another critic believes that "[t]he first two sections of *Fools of Fortune,* [are] told or written by Willie and Marianne" and that the first overview gives Willie's point of view: "Willie sees Woodcombe and Kilneagh as places full of 'the sense of the past'." The same critic goes on to say that, "ironically, considering the story which is to follow, [Willie] sees in Woodcombe something of an ideal" (Hildebidle 121), a rather confusing reading based on the

mistaken assumption that it is Willie's voice that we are hearing in the first historical overview. Yet another critic is more generally uncertain about the question of narrative point of view in the novel and believes that Imelda is "one of the crucial stream-of-consciousness narrators" (Cahalan 1988: 279), repeating this view in another source, where Imelda is grouped with Willie and Marianne in a trio "whose narratives dominate the novel" (Cahalan 1999: 164). A fourth critic suggests that "Trevor's narrative in *Fools of Fortune* is not chronological, and the narrative perspective is shared by *several* [my emphasis] of the characters in turn" (Hunt Mahony 208). A fifth correctly identifies the first overview, referring to it as a "prologue" but seems to ignore the second. In 'bracketing' together two widely different narrative units he further illustrates the tricky task of relating the narrative function of these different parts to the thematics of the total novel: "Bracketed by segments in authorial voice, the main body of the text presents the reporting voices of the three principals in a reprise pattern that is well-suited to the elegiac tenor of the theme and diction" (Deen Larsen 259). A sixth, finally, counts "three narrators who view the same events from different angles. One of the characters acts as a chorus figure and through a letter or journal he or she provides a commentary on other characters and events. Sometimes these comments record the views of the author who otherwise maintains a detached stance" (MacKenna 1990: 112-113). In general, these critics fail to take just account of the very special function held by these overviews in the narrative structure of the total novel. The probable reason for the confusion surrounding these overviews is that most commentators, in dealing with Trevor the storyteller, are primarily concerned with *thematic* rather than with *narrative* function. In the first instance, the overviews are included in the meaning-making function of the text, whereas in the second they are excluded from the main narrative of that particular part ("Willie" or "Marianne") by the functional separateness of the narrator. The overviews may not be clearly signalled in the table of contents, but the typography of the text sets them apart from

the main narrative, and, as the reader gets deeper into the narrative of the novel, the unmistakable qualities of the particular voice responsible for the narration in the overviews begin to stand out as distinctively different. For the purposes of my argument it is essential first to establish clearly the different narrative functions of the various <u>parts</u> (named after the main characters of the novel and given in the table of contents), <u>sections</u> (numbered 1,2 etc within each part) and <u>segments</u> (unnumbered but separated by asterisks within each section) of *Fools of Fortune*.[3]

There are, in fact, *four* distinct narrators in the novel and to display clearly the variation between different narrative units they are indicated A1 - D2 in the left column in the table below. The letter refers to a particular narrative voice and the digit after the letter refers to the first or second occurrence of this narrative voice. I have used the term 'epistolary monologue' in the table (B1 and C1) to refer to the two long monologues (by Willie and Marianne, respectively) that dominate the novel. They are not written as letters proper, but some critics (MacKenna 1990: 112-113 and Cahalan 1999: 158) have described them as letters, and the term will serve to remind us of their predominant mode of narrative expression.[4] In these parts the two central characters (Willie and Marianne) intermittently address each other directly in dialogic fashion and so create the impression of a private and intimate conversation or exchange of letters. At other times, this sense of a private dialogue between them is lost in the forward story-telling thrust of the episodes that these narrative units recount, and some parts (most obviously the two referred to by Schirmer and Driver above) are less private and personal, and the narrators seem to be addressing the reader rather than each other. It is doubtful, for instance, whether Willie's story about the aggrieved boarding school teacher urinating on a sleeping ex-colleague would have been intended for Marianne's

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[3] All references to the novel are to the first edition, William Trevor, *Fools of Fortune*. London: The Bodley Head, 1983.

[4] They are not, of course, to be seen as resembling the kind of traditional epistolary novel that is sometimes described by the German term "Briefwechselroman". See, for instance, Romberg 46-48.

ears. That episode seems to belong firmly in the male-dominated world of the public school. It represents a break of narrative style and reminds us of the fact that the relationship between the narrators and the reader in *Fools of Fortune* is a fluctuating and complicated one.

In the table below a conventional distinction is made between a first-person personal narrator using the pronoun 'I') and a third-person authorial narrator (using the pronouns 'he', 'she', 'they'). I also make a distinction between an "embodied" and a "disembodied" narrator, which, by and large, follows Jacob Lothe's use of Todorov and Stanzel in his treatment of Conrad concerning "the ontological status of the narrator" (Lothe 11). The former narrator is, of course, also a character in the narrative and has a physical voice that speaks to us from within the story, whereas the latter lacks such a voice and stands and speaks from outside the story.

The crucial difference between Willie and Marianne as narrators, on the one hand, and Imelda, on the other, is that Willie and Marianne are both embodied with a voice speaking their own stories, whereas Imelda, by and large, is disembodied and has to rely on a third-person narrator to tell her story. The difficulty with Imelda's parts, however, arises where this simple distinction is disturbed by Trevor's subtle manipulation of voice and where we occasionally get the impression that we may sporadically be hearing Imelda's physical voice directly as an embodied narrator. It is, very likely, these shifting perspectives that have caused some confusion among commentators.

The focus of this paper, however, is on the distinguishing characteristics and narrative function of sections A1 and A2. These are the sections that dominate the overall thematic configuration of meaning in the novel and that, because of their rather unique structural role, end up self-destructing. It is the *difference* between A as a narrator, on the one hand, and B, C and D, on the other, which yields this effect. The relationship between A and the reader is fundamentally different from that between the other narrators and the reader.

Table of narrative voices and their function in the novel

NARRATIVE UNITS	PAGES	TITLE OF THIS PART IN TABLE OF CONTENTS	NUMBERED SECTIONS	NUMBER OF SMALLER SEGMENTS WITHIN EACH SECTION	NARRATIVE VOICE	NARRATIVE FUNCTION AND PERSPECTIVE
A1	9-10	WILLIE	1	1	FRAME NARRATOR, IMPERSONAL, OMNISCIENT, DISEMBODIED	*FIRST HISTORICAL OVER VIEW*
B1	11-128	" - "	2-6	1,6,5,4,5	FIRST PERSON, PERSONAL, EMBODIED	EPISTOLARY MONOLOGUE: WILLIE ("I") ADDRESSING MARIANNE ('you")
A2	131	MARIANNE	1	1	FRAME NARRATOR, AUTHORIAL, IMPERSONAL, OMNISCIENT, DISEMBODIED	*SECOND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW*
C1	132-185	" - "	2-6	2,8,3,4,1	FIRST PERSON, PERSONAL, EMBODIED	EPISTOLARY MONOLOGUE: MARIANNE ("I") ADDRESSING WILLIE ("you")
D1	189-219	IMELDA	1-4	4,4,3,2	THIRD PERSON, AUTHORIAL, DISEMBODIED, OCCASIONALLY EMBODIED	ABOUT IMELDA ('she') AND OCCASIONALLY IMELDA'S POINT OF VIEW
B2	223-229	WILLIE	1 (UN-NUMBERED)	3	FIRST PERSON, PERSONAL, EMBODIED	MONOLOGUE, NOT EPISTOLARY, A SHORTER VERSION OF TREVOR'S STORY SAINTS"
C2	233-234	MARIANNE	FOUR ENTRIES IN DIARY	--	FIRST PERSON PERSONAL, EMBODIED	MARIANNE'S PRIVATE DIARY
D2	237-239	IMELDA	1 (UN-NUMBERED)	3	THIRD PERSON, AUTHORIAL, DISEMBODIED, OCCASIONALLY EMBODIED	ABOUT IMELDA ("she") OCCASIONALLY SHIFTING, UNCERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

The seeming symmetry of the table of contents is found to be, on closer examination, only the façade of a much more complex, varied and fluctuating structure. *Fools of Fortune* is a complex construction which derives its peculiar strengths and weaknesses from this very lack of formal structural congruity. The novel defeats its own inner absence of narrative structure by a very strong sense of thematic unity at the centre of its literary meaning. Perhaps sensing that the fragmentary genesis of the novel might threaten thematic unity, and knowing that "Saints" was only one of the stories that would be 'worked together' in this novel, the author decided to counteract its potential disjointedness by providing conduits of thematic focus displayed on the outside of the central story. This is precisely the function performed by the two historical overviews (A1 and A2) in *Fools of Fortune.* Their positioning in the total novel (at the very beginning of each of the long monologues by the two central characters Willie and Marianne) is intended to assist the reader in building a context around the text and to drain the edifice of potential narrative confusion. From the very beginning of the novel they introduce the theme of overall historical continuity and add a formal national, international and cultural superstructure to the private and familial stories of the main characters. That is the thematic function of the overviews in the novel.

It soon becomes obvious, however, that, in terms of their narrative function, these sections are not narrated by either of the main characters in spite of the fact that they appear at the start of Willie's and Marianne's first monologues, respectively; it is equally clear that they are not narrated by the same narrator responsible for the third-person narrative of Imelda's parts. The latter (D) is a largely conventional third-person authorial narrator. Very occasionally, however, both in D1 and D2, the voice of this narrator seems almost to come from inside the story and the distance between narrator and reader is drastically reduced. The pace of the narrative slows down, third-person personal pronouns are in temporary abeyance, and the narrator withdraws and allows the consciousness of the character to express itself more directly. In D1, for instance, the point of view is, shifted from a third-person "she"

(=Imelda) to ask direct questions or express ideas that may be seen to be in Imelda's own voice:

> In the mulberry orchard the midges began to bite. Fallen apples from the single apple tree lay among the long grass, green cooking apples, too bitter to eat. Was it Jerusalem Sister Mulcahy had said the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell had gone to? Was it Cuchullainn who had sent the headless bodies galloping to his enemy's camp in chariots? She'd become curious about her father because everyone made such a fuss, Sister Rowan saying Our Lady would intercede and Teresa Shea being jealous. (198)

It is this kind of shifting perspective, at times without the overt mediation of a narrator, that has made some critics treat Imelda's parts as personal (rather than authorial) narrative or examples of the 'stream of consciousness' technique. In D2 the narrative focus is further dissolved and at times loses is firm point of pronominal reference. Occasionally, the narrator in D2 is on close personal terms with the characters and expresses this lack of formality in the way in which, suddenly, he is actually - in spite of the third-person narrative - physically present in the church at the end of the novel: " 'O Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant,' intones the voice on Sundays and it is pleasant then in the musty church, no matter what the season" (238). It is impossible to attribute definitely and securely this emotion ("it is pleasant") to one of the characters. At times, in D1, we again seem to hear Imelda's voice in the third-person narrative: "Funny the way her mother said it so often: one day he will, they only had to wait. Funny the way she wrote things down in an old jotter so's you could hardly read it" (217). The second sentence, through the loss of the specific reference in "her mother" and the introduction of the spoken form "so's" potentially allows Imelda's voice within direct earshot of the reader. In D2, the identity of the narrator is, now and again, more indeterminate: "They say the mulberries should soon be picked, a bumper crop this year. Odd that the summer's drought should have urged the fruit on so" (237). (Who is finding it "odd"?) The itinerant perspective in

Imelda's parts makes it impossible to describe this narrator as 'omniscient' in the table above, a term often used fairly indiscriminately about most third-person narrators. At the same time, the fact remains that it is this third-person authorial voice that clearly dominates Imelda's two parts. This is why MacKenna can state so confidently that "the narrative is carried by the two principal protagonists [Willie and Marianne], who address each other directly in letter or diary form, while the thoughts of the other main character [Imelda] are revealed by an omniscient narrator" (MacKenna, 1990: 113). It is this con-fusion of voices that modulates the narrative complexity of *Fools of Fortune.*

Shifting perspectives, or what Genette has called "changements de focalisation," are not just "un parti narratif parfaitement défendable" (Genette 1972:211). In fact, they also tend to enrich narrative complexity and increase the reader's engagement with the text. They are often seen as a typical feature of Trevor's narrative art and may well merit the praise that Schirmer (among others) gives to the novel's "combination of multiple perspectives and first-person narration" (Schirmer 154). Referring to *Felicia's Journey,* a novel published eleven years after *Fools of Fortune,* Mary Fitzgerald-Hoyt commends the author's "brilliant manipulation of point of view" and "his profound understanding of conflicting perspectives" (Fitzgerald-Hoyt 411). The complexity of Trevor's narrative method varies from novel to novel and also sometimes within each novel. *Fools of Fortune,* however, is unusual in that this variation operates mostly in a structure supported by the formal division into different narrative units, each with its own narrator. It is only Imelda's parts that sometimes sporadically heighten the level of narrative complexity by allowing elaborate and sophisticated shifts to take place.

The overviews and narrative complexity

The two overviews (units Al and A2 in the table above), on the other hand, have a very simple, formal, reliable and omniscient narrator and reveal no genuine complexity or finesse in their narrative function. There is no intimacy with the characters or with the

setting, and Christian names are shunned: "a Quinton cousin" or "the third English girl" is used rather than Marianne (10). The focus of the narrative is on the generic rather than the specific case. These parts are narrated by a narrator who removes himself telescopically from the immediate context of the story itself in order to survey the historical framework of Anglo-Irish affairs in general and the family relationships (the Woodcombes and the Quintons) in the novel in particular. He inserts himself between the personal and familial story as told in Willie's, Marianne's and Imelda's parts and the reader. His role in the total novel illustrates the distinction that the Russian formalists emphasised between the *fabula* (or story), which refers to the chronological order of the text's events, and sj*uzet* (or plot) the way these events are organised and manipulated by the author. This narrator looks at the story from the outside and has decided to interfere with it (obviously with the author's approval) in a presumably objective effort to repair what he considers to be a weak and insecure structure. Here Trevor is a fabulist who worries about an insufficiency of *sjuzet* and feels it necessary artificially to strengthen the *fabula* by the insertion of two historical scholia. In the first overview (before Willie's first monologue), which serves as an exposition or prologue to the whole novel, he prepares the reader for one of its most important themes by pointing out and stressing a pattern in Anglo-Irish affairs not immediately or directly obvious in the two long personal monologues themselves. In the second, he feels it necessary to remind the reader of the importance of this overall thematic context before entering the private, personal world of Marianne. By introducing this simple frame narrator Trevor fundamentally alters the relation between reader and text.

The central meaning of the text is hidden behind layers of different narrative voices:

[Frame narrator] [Imelda] [Marianne] [Willie] [MEANING] [Willie] [Marianne] [Imelda] [Frame narrator]

The presence of the frame narrator in the two overviews counteracts narrative complexity. Lothe has discussed Conrad's narrative technique in a way which is eminently relevant to Trevor and *Fools*

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of Fortune: "There is a general danger attached to the narrative technique of interposing a 'simpler' narrator between the reader and the text's major (and more authoritative) one: the views of the frame narrator may reduce or destroy the complexity of the narrative he presents" (Lothe 24). In the two overviews the frame narrator contextualises, generalises and simplifies the story and gives the reader thematic directions to follow. They reduce the reader's private engagement with the meaning-making processes involved in reading the total novel.

In some respects, the role of Trevor's frame narrator can be compared to the fictional use of an 'editor' in the early history of the novel. In *Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels* and in the early epistolary novels, the author invents an external voice that becomes responsible for arranging and coordinating the narrative voices inside the story itself. This voice is sometimes seen as "the character in the novel who can continually and at any given moment take a panoramic view over the whole course of fictitious events" (Romberg 76). In these early novels, however, one of the most important functions of the 'editor' was to vouch for the existence and authenticity of the character and the materiel (the letters, for instance), a role that is not generally required in modern fiction. Romberg argues that "[t]he editor must be considered as a part of the fiction" (76). Although it was part of the conventions of the early novel, today the whole apparatus whereby, for instance, Swift introduces Captain Gulliver, the letter to Cousin Sympson and the latter's letter to the reader tends instead to emphasise that it is extraneous to the central story itself. In *Fools of Fortune* the separateness of the frame narrator similarly removes him from the fiction. He does share an important function with the 'editor': "By the mechanics of editorship the editor – technically speaking – is enabled to let his voice be heard among, and sometimes above, the characters in the novel" (Romberg 76). But instead of clearly advertising and/or authenticating the identity of his frame narrator, Trevor hides him among the fictional characters in the novel in a kind of role reversal of the traditional 'editor.'

The rather em-phatic nature of the statement that the frame narrator adds to the novel can also be seen to have an educational or didactic purpose. He 'intervenes' in the story ('histoire' in Genette's terminology) in order to provide the plot ('récit) with an overall thematic context for the benefit of the reader.

> Mais les interventions, directes ou indirectes, du narrateur à l'égard de l'histoire peuvent aussi prendre la forme plus didactique d'un commentaire autorisé de l'action: ici s'affirme ce qu'on pourrait appeler la *fonction idéologique* du narrateur (Genette 1972: 262-263)

The primary purpose of the commentary that Trevor provides in the overviews is to be functional and explanatory. These parts are much less literary than the rest of the novel; they are direct, matter-of-fact and impersonally neutral. They even use cliché to establish and illustrate the overall thematic context of the rest of the novel. There are several explanatory and rather obvious references of this kind: "This couple's only child was brought up in Woodcombe Rectory and later caused history again to repeat itself, as in Anglo-Irish relationships it has a way of doing" (10). The description of an Irish village with "its concrete convent dominating the single street, with agricultural machinery displayed next door to it" (10) is heavily reductive (Ireland equals religion and agriculture), conventional and cliché-ridden - a sort of thematic telegraphese. There is not much narrative complexity on show here.

The narrative structure of *Fools of Fortune* and the idea of narrative success in its correspondence with the reader hinges on balancing the simple, straightforward, largely factual and objective overviews against the more subjective, complex and elaborate meanings found in the other parts. The gaps that the monologues of the main characters and the third-person narrative in Imelda's parts leave open in the thematic structure of the novel are closed by the author/narrator by the insertion of the two historical overviews. Wolfgang Iser's well-known theories about the collaboration between text and reader and his insistence on the role of the reader in actualising the meaning of the text may help us understand how

these overviews function. More specifically, Iser's theory identifies a number of 'Leerstellen', literally 'empty places,' but in English usually translated as 'blanks' or 'gaps', in the text (Iser 182). These blanks perform an important function in the configuration of the meaning of a text and form part of a larger 'structure of indeterminacy.' A blank generates interaction between text and reader and initiates a process of 'ideation.' A reader is invited to make meaning by filling in these blanks in the text. Very generally, in narratological terms, we would expect the author of a traditional novel to attempt to fill these narrative gaps as the story unfolds, whereas a modern novelist like the Joyce of *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake,* on the other hand, would emphasise the gaps and relish their indeterminacy. In a modernist text, there is no intrinsic obligation to close these gaps at any time, certainly not at the end of the work. A detective story, on the other hand, would attempt to reduce any indeterminacy to a minimum and close down the reader's process of ideation at the end of the story.

The Italian novelist Mario Biondi, in a review of *Fools of Fortune,* highlights the process of interplay between hints or "minute revelations," on the one hand, and, on the other, the historical background. Together, they gradually and successively construct the meaning of the text for the reader.

> La vicenda, in superficie una semplice tragedia a sfondo storico e tinte cruente, è invece raccontata con grandissima finezza e sapienza letteraria procedendo per piccolissime agnizioni successive, espresse in maniera sommessa, che dapprima rischiano di sfuggire al lettore e poi lo prendono per mano e lo trascinano inesorabilmente verso un finale di una delicatezza al limite della consolazione. (Biondi internet review)

> (A literal translation: 'The story, on the surface a simple tragedy against an historical background and bloody colours, is, however, told with great finesse and literary skill, and proceeds by successive minute

revelations expressed in an unobtrusive manner, which at first run the risk of escaping the reader and then take him by the hand and drag him inexorably towards a finale with a tenderness that borders on consolation.')

What is special and unusual about *Fools of Fortune* is that the process of filling in the blanks is to such a large extent separated from the blanks themselves and placed in the two overviews, where the overall thematic fabric of the novel (Biondi's "historical background") is elucidated and bolstered. It is this that has caused some critical confusion about their role and authority in the novel. Since the functional meaning of the overviews is independent of the rest of the novel's narrative structure by being separately superimposed from the outside onto its thematic structure, we can actually see the overviews themselves disappear as the blanks are filled in. They self-destruct when the task that was assigned to them has been fulfilled. This is why so many critics either do not actively notice the narrative separateness of the overviews and why there is confusion as to whose voice they transmit. Their strategic function is to provide the reader with a single, secure and consistent perspective and to make blanks that may have appeared in the other parts of the novel disappear. They may supply a panoramic framework of meaning for the rest of the novel, but, like the 'editor' of classical novels, they soon run the risk of becoming redundant.

The overviews: theory and practice

Trevor's view of his novelistic fiction guarantees that he will always consider the needs of the readers of his novels: "At the end of a short story the reader's mind should be able to take the story on in his mind, but at the end of a novel he is entitled to expect a rounding-off" ("Contemporary Writers Series"). In *Fools of Fortune* the reader is provided with a thematic "rounding-off" in the form of two separate historical overviews. Here we are again reminded of the potential structural risks involved in Trevor's alternating between

long and short fictions. The spaces between them expand and contract in a way that the author does not always seem able to control. John Mellors manages to exemplify the damaging consequences of this genre vacillation on all of Trevor's fictions (short stories, novellas, and novels) in one short article on his work. He first castigates "Trevor's fussiness in trying to tie up loose ends," and then goes on to suggest that a short story he is discussing ("Lovers of their Time") "would have been far better left without the attachment of a novel's denouement" (Mellors 94). In his novella *Nights at the Alexandra,* Mellors argues, "Trevor has marred a short fiction by tacking on what reads like the resumé of the full length novel he might have written" (94). Finally, on the subject of *Fools of Fortune,* Mellors complains of a "Darby and Joan end to the book, and one feels that this excellent novel is yet another story which might have been even more telling without its last few pages" (95). Trevor's perceived need to supply the reader with a totalising context potentially undermines his gift for understatement and subtlety.

The question of literary complexity is very much also a question of narrative distance. Schirmer identifies and discusses what he terms "panoramic perspectives" in Trevor's fiction (10, 14, 23, 25), a technique which involves an often sudden narrative withdrawal to "a remote bird's-eye position" (Schirmer 23). Varying telescopic uses of distancing effects frequently appear in Trevor's early fiction. In *The Old Boys* the geographical context is Britain: "The rain spread from the west. It fell in Somerset in late afternoon; it caught the evening crowds unprepared in London. A woman, glad to see it, walked through it in a summer dress. A man in Putney, airing his dog, lost his dog on the common and died in October of a cold that had become pneumonia" (184). In *Mrs Eckdorf in O'Neill's Hotel* the reader is constantly moved around Dublin. "Far away from Thaddeus Street, in the suburb of Terenure, Mrs Sinnott's daughter, who fifty-one years ago had been christened Enid Mary and was now Mrs Gregan, listened to her husband's voice talking about tomatoes" (23-24). This technique, Schirmer suggests, is used by Trevor to introduce "ironic qualifications" by juxtaposing a specific character or event with a larger "deflating context of indifference"

(23). It is also an example of Trevor's tendency towards universal irony, which tries to make God himself the supreme ironist and human life devoid of plan or plot. It is universal, both in respect of time and place. The same inclination is noticed by Morrison (she calls it a "cosmological perspective"), and the concept of "significant simultaneity" is seen by her as dominating Trevor's work: "past and present are, actually, the same moment" (Morrison 5). This type of narrative adjustment can easily be used to relate 'now' to 'then' and to remind the reader of the significant and ever-present force of history in the seeming insignificance of a tiny detail. In one novel the separateness of a single paragraph performs the function of lifting the reader out of the triviality of a painful tooth extraction in a previous paragraph into a "nobler, more historical view of Dublin" (Mortimer 80):

> In Dublin the rain fell heavily that morning. Turf in public parks became soft underfoot and the unpainted wood of hoardings changed colour and soon could absorb no more. . . . Rain ran on Robert Emmet and Henry Grattan, on Thomas Davis, on O'Connell with his guardian angels, and gentle Father Mathew, apostle of temperance. . . . It damped the heads of Mangan and Tom Kettle and the Countess Markievicz, it polished to a shine the copper-green planes of a tribute to Yeats, Moore and Burke, Wolfe Tone and Charles Stewart Parnell, Goldsmith and ghostly Provost Salmon: dead men of Ireland were that morning invigorated. (*Mrs Eckdorf* 185-186)

This paragraph reminds us of Trevor's fondness for a totalising sense of an overall historical context. What, again, makes *Fools of Fortune* different from the other novels is that here the overviews, rather than being incorporated in the text of the main story and narrated by the main narrator, are given their own extended and narratologically separate voice and space.

On the level of functional narrative the nearest analogy to Schirmer's "panoramic" and Morrison's "cosmological" perspectives is the cinematic technique of the long shot (the opposite of a

close-up), which adds commentary on a central, specific issue by allowing the greater and wider context of a particular episode to be seen more or less simultaneously. In most of his fiction Trevor uses this technique to some advantage. In the three related short stories that make up "Matilda's England," for instance, a sequence which has thematic affinities with *Fools of Fortune,* he manages to contain the wider thematic context of Irish and English history within the character of Matilda herself. At other times he is less successful: John Stinson complains that "[i]n 'Beyond the Pale', for example, Trevor finds that implication is not enough, and he resorts at the end to some stiltedly direct commentary" (25). Stinson is disappointed for the same reason that we may be disappointed with the overviews in *Fools of Fortune.* The cinematic and panoramic nature of these overall perspectives deprives the reader of the pleasure of reading because they remove a large part of the imaginative input required to create meaning. They may go too far in drawing together the different strands of the thematic structure of the novel as these are 'blanked in' in the novel itself. They provide the reader with ready, one-dimensional solutions rather than allowing him to get on with the work himself. Trevor has often spoken of the need to "give readers their own imaginative terrain," but in the way the historical overviews are 'worked together' into *Fools of Fortune* he seems to have forgotten this (Adair 4).

Iser illustrates this cinematic effect in his discussion about the phenomenology of reading. The difference between a literary character as realised in a film (the actor that we can see) and the image of the same character generated by the literary text is that "the film is optical and presents a given object, whereas the imagination remains unfettered. Objects, unlike imaginings, are highly determinate, and it is this determinacy [as opposed to the indeterminacy of the literary text] which makes us feel disappointed" (Iser 138). In the two historical overviews Trevor excludes us as readers from the meaning-making process of the total novel. As a consequence, these sections function only to artificially accelerate the process of thematic configuration in the overall text. Since this action is accomplished by a process diametrically opposed to the

normal creative tendencies of a modern literary text - we are actually told in the overviews how to read the rest of the novel - these actions fill in the empty spaces that the text leaves open and thereby reduce the investigative, urgent and meaning-making pleasure of the reader.

In an interview that coincided with the publication of *Fools of Fortune* Trevor indirectly gave some further hints about his narrative technique: " I love cutting things, it's the short story writer in me, and I love taking chances with readers" (Hebert 10). This simple description illustrates the way an aesthetic strategy is realised in the fictional technique of reticence and understatement so typical of Trevor's prose style. Inevitably, filling in the gaps that Trevor left in the novel may take more than one reading. It is in the context of reading and re-reading that we can discern a further pattern in Trevor's narrative technique. If most readers involve themselves with the literary text just once this will inevitably have both commercial as well as literary-narrative implications. The average reader may read only once, whereas literary criticism, on the other hand, has been called "the art of rereading" (Johnson 3). Roland Barthes has insisted on this practice as an important aspect of literary study. He has shown that essential characteristics of the process of re-reading are in fundamental opposition to the idea of the book as commercial object, as a popular novel and a good read. This object has to be consumed at first reading without too much resistance, for another book to be written, published and sold. Reading and re-reading *Fools of Fortune* it becomes clear that the communicative function of the overviews is to give the general reader of the novel what Trevor the short story writer may have cut; they fill in the gaps between the stories ("Saints" and others) that were 'worked together' in the novel. The novelist could not afford to leave empty the blanks that had formed between these separate stories and in the main story itself. The two historical overviews now perform that function for the reader *in his first reading* in order to enable to novel to be consumed. They clearly and manifestly help the reader affix (cement and make permanent) a single meaning to the total story. In so doing, they reverse the process whereby, in Barthes's view, a text can escape being consumed and become instead a free and "plural text"

through a re-reading that "draws the text out of its internal chronology ('this happens *before* or *after* that') and recaptures mythic time (without *before* or *after*)" (Barthes 16). The overviews in *Fools of Fortune* establish the internal chronology and counteract mythic time.

The difference between the overviews and the rest of the novel can also be illustrated with reference to the critical distinction established by Umberto Eco in *The Role of the Reader* between 'closed' and 'open' texts. *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* defines these terms in a way that shows their relevance to Trevor's text: "An 'open' text . . . requires the reader's active and attentive collaboration in the creation of meaning; whereas a 'closed' text . . . more or less determines or predetermines a reader's response" (Cuddon 771). Once the central meaning of the text has been established, a re-reading of the novel will reveal the superfluity of the overviews. They begin to idle and become thematically redundant. They now fail to impact on the total meaning of the text because that meaning is already present. The function they were given relates only to the first reading of the text. On re-reading the novel, the main part of *Fools of Fortune*, by virtue of their "successive minute revelations expressed in an unobtrusive manner" (Biondi above), continue to demand the reader's active and attentive collaboration in the creation of meaning. The two historical overviews, on the other hand, idle, stall and self-destruct.

Concluding remarks

As a result, *Fools of Fortune* is, paradoxically, both a narratologically complex and, at the same time, a straightforward novel. For the main part, Trevor weaves an intricate, meandering pattern of different narrative voices that recount haunting stories of personal drama and tragic suffering which cannot fail to engage and move the reader. Here he uses many of the free and flexible techniques available to the modern writer. In the narratologically separate historical overviews, the contrasting voice of the omniscient frame narrator adds a panoramic perspective in order to provide the reader with a thematic superstructure. This is a different Trevor, who, in a more traditional

storytelling mode, reverts to a pre-modern pattern of narrative and authorial control.

Certain aspects of the overviews themselves and their function in the novel seem to form part of an elusive and tantalizing set of structuring oppositions. The overviews can be posited both as highly visible and as almost invisible, and they are, at the same time, the pipes outside the structure and the narrative subtlety that some critics have failed to notice. In the way they control and guide the reader's thematic exploration they are dominant and overpowering, and at the same time they are redundant in that they do not give the reader any important information not already available, explicitly or implicitly, elsewhere in the novel. In several ways they seem to dominate the view, and recede from view, along an oscillating curve in rather subtle and inscrutable ways as and when they are required to provide a resource of contextual meaning for the reader.

The contradictoriness of the novel's structure may also be a reflection of the novel's thematic concerns. If Trevor is trying to find a perspective from which to view Anglo-Irish history 'objectively', the narrative structure becomes part of his analysis of the ways in which history itself is imagined in an Anglo-Irish context. The voice that fills in the blanks and that offers a stable and authoritative historical overview is also subject to the kinds of narrative and 'subjective' uncertainty and confusion that dominate the other parts. The historical overviews can, to some extent, be seen as rather cumbersome appurtenances that testify to Trevor's need for his novels to be (perhaps excessively) summed up and buttoned down. At the same time, however, they resonate with the more unstable and subjective structures that they compete with in the novel and so contribute to the overall analysis of voice and perspective, narratologically and thematically. The success and popularity of *Fools of Fortune* is to a large extent due to this separation of narrative powers. On the one hand, the reader relies on the overviews for overall contextual meaning, and, on the other, he is free to ignore and forget them once they have performed their appointed role in the novel.

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A "Cry of the Dying Century": Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*, and the Women's Cause

TUIRE VALKEAKARI

Kate Chopin's 1899 novel(la) *The Awakening*[1] has elicited a multitude of scholarly responses since the beginning of the revival of Chopin studies at the end of the 1960s.[2] Although feminist critics' enthusiastic embrace of Chopin and her work has influenced *The Awakening*'s reception across the divided terrain of literary criticism, current views of the novel's position on the "women's cause" still vary greatly. Some scholars categorically label the feminist readings of the text anachronistic. Harold Bloom's 1987 interpretation, which focuses on the narcissistic and autoerotic nature of the female protagonist Edna Pontellier's sexual awakening, articulates such a non-feminist standpoint with particular clarity: "*The Awakening*, a flawed but strong novel, now enjoys an eminent status among feminist critics, but I believe that many of them weakly misread the book, which is anything but feminist in its stance" (1). In this respect, Nancy Walker's reading from 1979,

[1] Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899), in *The Awakening: Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical and Historical Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Five Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy A. Walker (Boston and New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1993), 19–137 (hereafter cited parenthetically in the text).

[2] Following the common praxis, I date the beginning of the Chopin revival to 1969, the year of the publication of *The Complete Works of Kate Chopin*, 2 vols., ed. Per Seyersted, and of Per Seyersted, *Kate Chopin: A Critical Biography*. For a brief overview of Chopin scholarship predating 1969, see Walker 2001: 22–24.

which was anthologized at least twice in the 1990s,[3] closely resembles Bloom's assessment: according to Walker, "[t]here is, in Chopin's novel, no stance about women's liberation or equality" (69).

A subtler reservation about tenets taken for granted by most feminist readings comes across, for example, in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's 1988 introduction to *The Awakening*. While probing the novel's possible connectedness with women's position in society, Fox-Genovese refrains from wholeheartedly accepting the notion that the book "addresses a social problem: the condition of women" (34). In her view, *The Awakening*'s individualistic portrayal of the surfacing of Edna's sexual self from the depths of suppression seeks to treat the protagonist's sexuality "independent of gender relations," although Chopin wrote, concedes Fox-Genovese, "around or above" the women's cause (38).

Even cautiously expressed skepticism concerning Chopin's intention to address women's condition in and through *The Awakening* has, as can be expected, triggered resistance rather than appreciation in feminist circles. Martha Fodaski Black, for instance, powerfully attacks Fox-Genovese's reading in her 1992 article, "The Quintessence of Chopinism," whose title deliberately evokes Shaw's *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*. Black argues that Fox-Genovese "misleads us" by speaking of Chopin's "scant interest in social problems" and by suggesting that Chopin isolated Edna's individual sexuality from the larger context of the era's gender roles (Black 1992: 95; Fox-Genovese 1988: 34, 39). Since *The Awakening* opens with the portrayal of a caged parrot and a similarly confined mocking-bird, Black corroborates her criticism by evoking Shaw's "The Womanly Woman," which compares married women to caged parrots. According to Black, *The Awakening* "tests society's assumptions

[3] Walker 1979, in *Contexts for Criticism*, ed. Donald Keesey, 3rd ed. (Mountain View, CA, 1998), 65–70; and in *The Awakening: An Authoritative Text, Biographical and Historical Contexts, Criticism*, ed. Margo Culley, 2nd edition (New York and London, 1994), 252–256. The later references to Walker 1979 will be to the pagination in *Contexts for Criticism*.

about women," thus "effectively giv[ing] Shavian argument fictional form" (113).

Positioning myself between Black's and Fox-Genovese's readings, I suggest that Fox-Genovese's erudite analysis of the general historical and sociocultural background of the women of Chopin's class and era—which leads Fox-Genovese to highlight what she sees as Chopin's rather uncritical acceptance of the sexual politics underlying the social role of the Southern belle—needs to be complemented with a renewed focus on Chopin's personal and family history. In this respect, as in many others, scholarship on *The Awakening* can greatly benefit from perspectives partly opened up and partly re-affirmed by Emily Toth's carefully researched 1990 *Kate Chopin* (as well as its revised and shortened 1999 version, *Unveiling Kate Chopin*). Toth's work both builds on and significantly adds to the two earlier Chopin biographies by Daniel Rankin (1932) and Per Seyersted (1969).[4] As my dialogue with Toth will demonstrate, such factors as Chopin's awareness of her strong

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[4] Toth's attitude to Rankin is much more reserved than her attitude to Seyersted and his work. She regards Seyersted—with his feminist mother (at one time, head of the Norwegian Feminist Association; Toth 1998a: xxi) and with his personal experience of divorce (Toth 1990b: 286)—as being much better equipped for his task than Rankin, a Catholic (Marist) priest, who, in Toth's words, lacked "worldly aids to understanding Kate Chopin" (1990b: 286). Toth also reproaches Rankin for certain fundamental deficiencies in his field work and methodology (1990a: 402–403; 1990b). From time to time Toth is, however, also critical of conclusions drawn by Seyersted. She scolds him for relying too confidently on Rankin's findings and for having scant interest in reinterpreting Chopin's life (Toth 1990b: 285, 291). In spite of her critical comments, however, Toth never belittles the significance of the pioneering work of Seyersted, whose crucial role in the rediscovery of Chopin is beyond dispute. One manifestation of Toth and Seyersted's mutual respect and cooperation is their common editorship of both *A Kate Chopin Miscellany* (with Toth as assistant editor) and *Kate Chopin's Private Papers* (mostly edited by Toth and published as "a particular tribute to Per Seyersted"; Toth 1998a: xxiii). The Chopin biography written by Toth, with its careful documentation of sources, reflects a scholarly attitude that is both meticulous and empathetic. As Toth herself wryly points out, by the publication of her 1990 book she had already been "working on Kate Chopin's literary career longer than she [i.e., Chopin] did" (1990a: 9). She revises and/or expands several findings of Rankin and Seyersted—starting from such a detail as Chopin's year of birth, which earlier Chopin research dated to 1851, but Toth (and with her, most of current Chopin scholarship) to 1850. As for the issue of empathy, Toth does not hide her intention of writing "feminist biography" (1990b: 292).

and unconventional female ancestors reveal her exposure to influences which facilitated a critical distance to the social role customarily assigned to Southern belles. Though never an active suffragist (see. e.g. F. Chopin 167), Chopin addressed the vicissitudes of the Southern female predicament by portraying—in *The Awakening* as well as several other works—private impasses experienced by fictional female characters. In so doing, she indirectly engaged in the sexual politics of her era.

Complicating the Image of Chopin's "Southernness"

In defending her argument concerning Chopin's scant interest in the women's cause, Fox-Genovese stresses Chopin's identity as a Southern woman. She reminds us that while the rise of abolitionism inspired many suffragists in the North, in the South the connection between race relations and gender relations rather resulted in the pressure to maintain the oppressive status quo in both racial and sexual politics (35–37). While addressing the slow dismantling of the antebellum way of life in the postbellum South, Fox-Genovese highlights the role imposed on the white women of Chopin's class and generation as preservers of the "closest possible facsimile of antebellum class and race relations" (37). She suggests that postbellum Southern belles were made to stand as "the bulwark against social and racial chaos," and that they, loyal to their upbringing, usually adopted and internalized this role. When arguing that no "systematic rebellion against women's prescribed role" can be found in the works of the first postbellum generations of Southern female writers, Fox-Genovese explicitly includes Chopin and *The Awakening* in this group of authors and literary works (37).

At first sight, Chopin's personal and family history seems to support Fox-Genovese's approach to Chopin and her writing. Although St. Louis (where Chopin, née Kate O'Flaherty, was born and raised) took the Northern side during the Civil War, mentally—or "sentimentally," as Rankin puts it (13)—Southern (particularly Creole) influences made themselves felt almost as

powerfully in the St. Louis of Kate O'Flaherty's childhood and youth as they did in New Orleans. (New Orleanians of French and French Creole origin founded St. Louis, and the Mississippi River kept the contact between the two cities close and alive; see e.g. Rankin 12–13.) Young Kate's parents—Thomas O'Flaherty, of Irish parentage, and Eliza Faris O'Flaherty, of French ancestry—were slave owners, and Kate received the education of a Southern belle. Her half-brother George, whom she loved dearly, died a Confederate soldier (perishing of typhoid fever) when she was thirteen. In the same year, her best friend's family, the Gareschés, were banned from St. Louis because of their Confederate sympathies (Toth 1990a: 67; Toth 1999: 28–29). After the war, Kate O'Flaherty's 1870 marriage to Oscar Chopin and her subsequent move to his native Louisiana initiated her into the life of a Southern wife and mother. The years she spent in Louisiana saw the birth of her six children in New Orleans and Cloutierville in 1871–1879. In 1884, the widowed Kate Chopin returned with her children to St. Louis, to be with her fatally sick mother. She stayed in St. Louis even after Eliza O'Flaherty's death in 1885, residing in the gradually changing city for the rest of her life.

Chopin's thinking and writing were influenced—though not mechanistically determined—by her Southern education and experience. However, the aspects of her Southernness which may have encouraged female submissiveness were counterbalanced, from early on, by an exposure to multiple models of female existence and diverse interpretations of womanhood. This exposure began with the stories of the young Kate's maternal great-grandmother, Madame Victoire Verdon Charleville (d. 1863). After Thomas O'Flaherty's tragic death in a railroad accident when Kate was five, she grew up in a household headed by two women—her mother and Madame Charleville, both widows who never remarried.[5] Madame Charleville, who was a skillful and impressive storyteller, took over

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[5] Toth 1991: ix; Toth 1992: 24; Toth 1999: 10–11. By not remarrying after her husband's death, Kate Chopin chose a path previously taken by her mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother (Toth 1991: ix).

Kate's education, and the child learned at an early age about strong and unconventional women in the maternal line of her family history (Toth 1990a: 34–40; Toth 1999: 13–15). Madame Charleville was able to tell Kate tales dating back to the time when life in St. Louis was part of the American frontier experience. The cultural tradition that Madame passed on to her great-granddaughter included, for example, stories of the early "frontier brides" of the Charleville family, and the story of Victoire Verdon, Madame Charleville's mother. Victoire and Joseph Verdon were the first married couple in Catholic St. Louis to be granted a legal separation; after the separation Victoire Verdon became a successful businesswoman who, after a modest start, eventually operated a line of trading vessels between St. Louis and New Orleans (Toth 1990a: 36–37). What is known of Kate Chopin's maternal family history shows that by managing her late husband's property in Louisiana, and especially by establishing a career as a writer, she created her own version of the female initiative and independence demonstrated by such protagonists of Madame Charleville's stories as Victoire Verdon.

Another factor that seems to have helped Chopin to reflect on options available to women from early on was her attendance, as a child, at a school run by nuns. The stereotypes related to the cloistered life are well known; what is often forgotten is that nuns were among the few (white) women in Chopin's society engaged in professional work outside the domestic sphere. They, for example, taught other people's children, were involved in scholarly work, and had administrative duties. The young Kate's closest friend, the intelligent Kitty Garesché—whom many scholars consider to be the real-life precursor of Edna Pontellier's childhood friend in *The Awakening* (*A* VII: 36)—later chose the vocation of a Catholic sister (Toth 1999: 3). True, Chopin wrote in an 1894 diary entry that she would rather be a dog than a nun (1894b: 182). However, despite this provocative remark by the secularized and mature Chopin, the Sacred Heart nuns (who were, in Toth's words, "famous for their brisk efficiency and keen intellect"; 1999: 3) were a significant influence in her early environment: their example showed that

women can dedicate their lives to aspirations and vocations other than traditional domestic duties.

We should also bear in mind that, first of all, Chopin's husband tolerated more unconventional behavior on his wife's part (largely because of his New Orleans Creole background)[6] than our knowledge of the mores of the era's Southern upper classes would have us assume;[7] second, that Chopin must have thoroughly and critically examined her acquired views of morality and gender roles during her romance (whatever its degree of actuality) with the married plantation owner Albert Sampite in 1883–1884;[8] third, that Chopin was an internationally traveled woman; and, fourth, that she was profoundly acquainted with European literature, where such issues as marital infidelity were, at the time, addressed much more freely and explicitly than in contemporaneous American fiction. As all these factors show, discussions of Chopin's general sociocultural context should be complemented with careful consideration of her personal and family history. This history brings interesting twists and complications to what may otherwise be interpreted too straightforwardly as Chopin's "self-evidently" Southern female identity.

The Awakening as an Empathetic Tale

Nancy Walker argues in her 1988 article that *The Awakening* is "far from autobiographical" (67). However, while it is true that Chopin and Edna "were the products of very different backgrounds" (Walker 1988: 67), Chopin being a secularized Catholic from the

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[6] As Nancy A. Walker writes, "New Orleans Creole culture in the late nineteenth century constituted a world unto itself—a set of traditions, mores, and customs unlike any other in America. [...] [W]omen in Creole culture, as is evident in *The Awakening*, were far less affected by the Victorian strictures that dictated the behavior of middle-class women in other parts of the country" (1988: 67, 70).

[7] See e.g. Rankin 81; Seyersted 38; Toth 1991: xi.

[8] The inclusion of the Chopin-Sampite romance in the Chopin chronology published in *Kate Chopin's Private Papers*, edited by Toth and Seyersted, implies Seyersted's approval of Toth's claim that the relationship was real, not just a rumor. See also Toth 1990a: 164–173. Walker, on the other hand, argues that the evidence Toth provides of the affair is "maddeningly anecdotal" (1993b: 8; see also Walker 2001: 49–50).

city of St. Louis and Edna a Protestant from rural Kentucky, Chopin's motivation in writing *The Awakening* seems to have arisen from a personal experience—a "vast solitude" in which she made "[her] own acquaintance":

> About eight years ago [i.e., around 1888] there fell accidentally into my hands a volume of Maupassant's tales. These were new to me. I had been in the woods, in the fields, groping around; looking for something big, satisfying, convincing, and finding nothing but— myself; a something neither big nor satisfying but wholly convincing. It was at this period of my emerging from *the vast solitude in which I had been making my own acquaintance*, that I stumbled upon Maupassant. (1896a: 700; italics added)

Critics' comments on this passage, found in an 1896 essay draft, usually focus on Chopin's mention of Maupassant (see e.g. Ewell 159). However, the author's rare reference to her profound personal crisis—presumably triggered by the chain of events beginning with her husband's death—is equally important for the study of *The Awakening*. The crisis seems to have culminated in the years following Eliza O'Flaherty's 1885 death; Toth mentions in passing that Chopin abandoned the church within a year of losing her mother (1990a: 20). Probably referring to her own wrestling with fundamental existential questions, Chopin later wrote the two-line poem "I Wanted God" (1898b). The piece portrays the resolution of the poetic persona's existential quest in terms of a departure from organized religion: "I wanted God. In heaven and earth I sought,/And lo! I found him in my inmost thought."

A survivor, Chopin was able to redefine her social vocation and existential position; she, in other words, successfully coped with the unanticipated turns of fate that the young society belle Kate O'Flaherty in all likelihood could not have expected to be her lot in adult life. In *The Awakening*, however, she tells the story of a woman who did not survive—"A Solitary Soul" (the novel's original title) who could not find a way out from her "vast solitude" and create a

new life for herself after discovering that the role of a Southern belle did not satisfy her.[9] Chopin's endeavor is deeply empathetic: *The Awakening* depicts an existential *cul-de-sac* resembling, at an abstract level, the author's own personal crisis which forced her to re-evaluate the meaningfulness of her prescribed social position. While Chopin's process resulted in the discovery of adequate survival strategies and a renewal of her artistic creativity, her heroine's search of self ends in suicide.

Chopin's 1899 poem "The Haunted Chamber"—often misinterpreted by readings confusing the poetic persona with the author—further illustrates the author's empathy towards the Ednas of her era and her subtle critique of Southern sexual politics. Chopin wrote "The Haunted Chamber" just after reading the proofs for *The Awakening* (Toth 1990a: 324; Toth 1999: 218). Although the poem and the novel share no such obvious features as, for example, common character names, "The Haunted Chamber" can be read, as Toth briefly suggests (1990a: 324; 1999: 218–219), as Chopin's commentary on *The Awakening*. Not unlike *The Awakening*, "The Haunted Chamber" is about "a fair, frail, passionate woman who fell." Rather than being introduced to the woman herself, however, the reader this time encounters two individuals discussing the woman's fate. Although she is dead, the tone of the conversation is light, jocular, and, more than anything else, patronizing: "[W]ith bottle between us, and clouds of smoke/From your last cigar, 'twas more of a joke/Than a matter of sin or a matter of shame/That a woman had fallen [...]." Judging from mere textual markers, the gender of neither the first-person narrator nor the discussion partner can be stated with certainty. Heather Kirk Thomas, who argues that the poem records Chopin's "burgeoning cynicism" about the

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[9] According to her biographers, Chopin seems to have evoked and modified in *The Awakening* the life history of a woman who had lived in the French Quarter of New Orleans and whose story and fate were well known there. While reiterating this assumption Toth says, relying on Rankin, that this was "a true story that Kate Chopin heard from Phanor Breazeale [an in-law of Chopin's]" (1990a: 324). Strictly speaking, Rankin does not actually claim that Breazeale told the story to Chopin. While doing field research, Rankin met Breazeale (Rankin vii), who simply seems to have implied in their discussion that Chopin must have known the story (Rankin 92).

approaching reception of *The Awakening,* seems to identify the "I" with Chopin herself (36). The author should not, however, be confused with the poetic persona; I agree with Toth that the poem's narrator is intended to be taken as male. Chopin used a male persona at least in one other piece—an unpublished essay draft where she both utilized and explicitly addressed the strategy of adopting a male disguise: "I disguised myself as a gentleman smoking cigars with my feet on the table. Opposite me was another gentleman (who furnished the cigars) [...]" (1896a: 700). In connection with the essay, Chopin's publisher regarded the male persona as a construction of "unnecessary machinery" and asked Chopin to change her strategy for the final version (W. H. Page 126). She followed the instructions (see Chopin 1896b) but deployed a similar technique in "The Haunted Chamber," which was not published in her lifetime.

"The Haunted Chamber" can be viewed as a sequel to *The Awakening.* After the untroubled gossiping that opens the poem, the narrator's companion leaves the "I" alone in his chamber. At this point, the poem's atmosphere changes drastically, now focusing on the tragedy of the "fair, frail, passionate" woman's fate. This alteration of the mood is brought about by the dead woman's voice, which suddenly reverberates in the room, filling the chamber with agony: "The far, faint voice of a woman, I heard,/'Twas but a wail, and it spoke no word./It rose from the depths of some infinite gloom/And its tremulous anguish filled the room." However, the narrator's emotions remain untouched, despite the pain clearly discernable in the voice of the ghost. Instead of empathy, he is only able to feel boredom while brooding over the possibility of an involuntary all-night exposure to the woman's "whin[ing]": "[N]ow I must listen the whole night through/To the torment with which I had nothing to do—/But women forever will whine and cry/And men forever must listen—and sigh—[.]" These last lines of the poem, in particular, make little sense unless the "I" is interpreted as male.

The unresponsive narrator regards the woman's tragedy as an episode which does not concern him in any way; the thought that the societal values epitomized by him could have contributed to, or

even caused, the individual tragedy never occurs to him. The poem provokes the reader to resent the narrator's indifferent disposition—that is, his denial of any shared or communal responsibility for the deceased woman's fate. This aspect of "The Haunted Chamber" illuminates the existence of a societal strand in Chopin's oeuvre; the text could hardly have been written without recognition of the influence of societally determined gender roles on individual lives and fates. In "The Haunted Chamber," *The Awakening,* and several other writings, Chopin examines the connection between Southern belles' occasionally self-destructive, "irrational" behavior and the rigidity of the Southern definition of women's place in society.[10]

The Awakening as an Analytic Tale

While empathetic, *The Awakening* is also analytic—in Black's words, a "diagnostic" tale (98, 112); the term suggests a diagnosis of the social condition of Chopin's female peers. "Diagnosis" is an identification of the cause(s) of certain symptoms, rather than a proposal or plan as to how the malady could be remedied. *The Awakening*—a diagnostic *fin-de-siècle* novel which both reflects and actively examines the unresolved tensions characterizing the transitional position of the women of Chopin's class and era—similarly refrains from offering an answer to the question of how the tragic heroine could find a way out of her existential impasse. The "woman question" emerges in the novel literally as a question,

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[10] For St. Louis discussions concerning upper-class women's suicides around the time Chopin wrote *The Awakening,* see the newspaper piece "Has High Society Struck the Pace that Kills?" (Chopin 1898a). The piece contains brief interviews with Chopin and three other "society women," conducted in the immediate aftermath of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* editorial of January 23, 1898, which commented on four suicides committed by "young women of high social position" within a month. Chopin's statement is, unfortunately, brief and defensive, providing little material for analysis. Annoyed by the discussion's patronizing tone, she seems to have refrained from any comments that might have been interpreted as indicating, against her intentions, an approval of the implied suggestion of some gender-specific, feminine flaw: "But do not men do the same thing every day? Why all this talk about women?" (222). There is little doubt, however, that the four tragedies and the subsequent public debate gave Chopin food for thought, influencing the writing of *The Awakening.*

namely, a query as to why Edna (a woman of respected social standing, a woman with no apparent worries, and a woman married to a reasonably wealthy and decent man) considers her life so unbearable that she chooses death over the private status quo. Between the lines, *The Awakening* offers a diagnosis—not of a patient with a psychopathology, but of a woman whose individual fate opens up a critical perspective on the sociocultural condition of the women of Chopin's milieu, class, and generation.

Serving as an impetus for Chopin's diagnostic criticism, the notion that womanhood can be lived out in a variety of ways powerfully informs *The Awakening*. The novel attacks, first of all, Southern society's inadequate recognition of women as a diverse group of individuals who may hold different views as to what constitutes a fulfilling and meaningful life. (This attack was largely ignored by *The Awakening*'s contemporaries, who mainly focused on deprecating the text's degree of sexual explicitness and labeled the novel "too strong drink for moral babes"; see e.g. Rankin 173; Martin 1988a: 8; Toth 1990a: 344; and Walker 1993b: 14.) Chopin approaches the issue of diverse womanhood by creating, as critics have noted, a constellation of three different women (see e.g. Walker 2001: 21; Showalter 1988: 47–48; Wolkenfeld 246). The novel's New Orleans Creole community embraces the devoted mother-woman, personified in Adèle Ratignolle. It also accepts, with some reservations, the dedicated and talented female artist, embodied in Mademoiselle Reisz. Edna, however—a woman refusing to be solely a wife and a mother, but lacking either the sufficient artistic talent or the passion and focused ambition necessary for the successful pursuit of an artistic career—cannot find a suitable social role for herself. Notably, *The Awakening* is not a melodramatic story about an individual endowed with extraordinary talents that would far exceed the degree of giftedness and creative passion around her. Chopin's very choice to endow her heroine with traits of mediocrity—"She [Adèle] isn't a musician, and I'm not a painter," says Edna to her husband (*A* XIX: 77)—is one indicator of the social criticism embedded in the novel. Edna's ordinariness invites and enables the reader to connect her

condition with that of the real-life Ednas who peopled late-nineteenth-century Southern communities.

The second, interrelated aspect of Chopin's social "diagnosis" comes across in the polyvocality of Edna's awakened self: *The Awakening* not only criticizes the depicted society's inadequate recognition of the diversity of women and their talents, but it also argues against the "one woman, one role" type of thinking that prevented women from choosing multiple callings simultaneously. The awakened Edna would like to pursue various roles and vocations, rather than being confined to one option: "She thought of Léonce and the children. They were a part of her life. But they need not have thought that they could possess her, body and soul" (*A* XXXIX: 137). The grammatically unnecessary (and therefore emphatic) indefinite article in front of the expression "part of her life" highlights Edna's resentment of the cage effect—her *exclusive* placement in a niche that others have defined, on her behalf, as her lot in life.[11]

The third aspect of Chopin's diagnostic criticism focuses on the same issue that Adrienne Rich addresses while discussing the Northern poet Emily Dickinson: Rich points out, quoting Richard Chase, that one of the careers always open to American upper-(middle-)class women of the nineteenth century was that of "perpetual childhood" (166). It is true that most Southern white women knew from personal experience what hard work on plantations and farms meant; the lives of Southern belles often changed drastically after they were married (see e.g. Bleser and Heath). However, while motherhood—one major aspect of the change—forced them to adopt adulthood in relation to their children, the same adulthood did not necessarily imbue all other spheres of their lives.

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[11] This indefinite article, stressing how carefully Edna pondered her prescribed role in her family and community before swimming "far out," has a role to play in the analysis of the deliberateness of Edna's suicide; the quoted passage is taken from the novel's last chapter. Tellingly, Wendy Martin (1988a: 23), who considers Edna's suicide a passive, almost unmotivated drifting into death (a reading that I will challenge towards the end of this article) accidentally omits this tiny textual marker while quoting the same passage.

Before her awakening Edna, revealingly, never seriously questions the "career" of psychological childhood imposed on her. On learning how to swim, however, she exclaims: "Think of the time I have lost splashing about like a baby!" (*A* X: 46). This realization notwithstanding, her process of maturing into adulthood (that is, into a genuine, self-conscious subjectivity) proves extremely difficult, although she longs for a comprehensive psychological independence. True, her sense of "having descended in the social scale" is outweighed by her "corresponding sense of having risen in the spiritual [scale]" (*A* XXXII: 115) during the initial euphoria that follows her separation from her husband and her move to a new home. It soon dawns on her, however, that the task of constructing a new life will be much more arduous than dismantling the old one was. Having lived almost thirty years in a world whose rules and conventions have prepared her exclusively for one role, that of the obedient housewife, Edna is not in possession of psychological tools needed for coping with the new situation. She gradually realizes that if she permanently abandons her accustomed way of life, nobody will save her from the absence of familiar daily routines by offering her new ones, nor will anybody save her from existential anxiety by actively supplying meaning to her life. The demand that she should create a new life of self-reliance for herself,[12] piece by piece and day by day, proves too overwhelming for her. Tellingly, the awakened Edna's new residence is called the "pigeon-house." The pigeon is, as Black ironically observes, "a domestic bird, usually monogamous, that we associate with a coop or wobbling parasitically on the ground, hoping to be fed" (105; see also Martin 1988a: 22). When the awakened protagonist "nests in the little house," as Black puts it, the reader is not really convinced that Edna "will have the strength to soar and fly away" (105).

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[12] In Chapter XXIV, Edna reads Emerson. Rather than linking the scene with "Self-Reliance," Toth emphasizes that Emerson "believed deeply in separate, complementary spheres for the sexes" (1990a: 52–53). Accordingly, Toth sees the detail that Edna "read Emerson until she grew sleepy" (*A* XXIV: 93) as an instance of Chopin's deliberately feminist irony.

The reader's suspicion is justified: ultimately Edna does not have the strength to fly, as is indicated by the last chapter's bird with a broken wing (the final piece in the jigsaw puzzle of *The Awakening*'s oft-discussed bird imagery). After the months of Adèle's pregnancy that constitute the novel's temporal span, Adèle gives birth to a new baby, thus strengthening her already secure position in society. The reader is also left to assume that Mademoiselle Reisz will continue her existence—as introvert and prickly as ever, but able to survive because of her passionate art which nourishes her soul. Edna, by contrast, has "given birth" to a process that she cannot actualize in any way. For her, the experience of witnessing Adèle's labor becomes, as critics have noted, the final impetus that makes her realize her "position in the universe" (*A* VI: 31; see e.g. Seyersted 146; Jacobs 93). While watching Adèle's agony, Edna sees—as if for the first time, although she has children herself—the inescapability of the triad of sex (legal or illicit), childbearing, and childrearing, which the women of her generation and context had little opportunity to manipulate. The sight of Adèle performing the woman's "labor" reveals to Edna the fixedness of her own confinement to the prescribed role of wife and mother, mercilessly disclosing the futility of her effort to create an alternative way of life in the society of her contemporaries.[13]

Demonstrating, through symbolic behavior, that a circle has come full, Edna eventually returns to where everything began—the first site of her awakening, the sensuous tropical island of Grand Isle, which she now finds in an unwelcoming off-season condition. Mixing images of progression (a triumphant entrance into a limitless

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[13] Chopin breaks away from Victorian conventions of the birth narrative: rather than pointing to a secretive event taking place behind closed doors, and eventually having a doctor or midwife emerge from behind the doors with the baby, Chopin leads us into the birthing room. During this literary *coup d'état* (which includes, as critics have noted, a realistic depiction of labor pains), the narration focuses on the interaction between two women—Adèle, the mother in labor, and Edna, her companion during the ordeal. We never see the baby, nor do we find out its gender, nor are we even told whether the infant is healthy. The scene's deliberate focus on the women demonstrates how pointedly Chopin, at least at times, created what today would be called feminist or woman-centered writing.

freedom; see Gilbert 328) and regression (a return to childhood and even to the waters of the womb; see e.g. Wolff 257–258; Jacobs 94), Chopin shows how Edna "continues" her belatedly started process towards independence by choosing the only route that she considers open and available. Instead of returning to the community where she cannot re-create herself, Edna commits suicide by "swim[ming] far out, where no woman had swum before" (*A* X: 46).

Edna's Suicide

Chopin portrays Edna's awakening as potentially holistic and all-embracing: according to the narrator's remark in an early chapter, Edna "was beginning to realize her position in the universe as a human being, and to recognize her relations as an individual to the world within and about her" (*A* VI: 31–32). The primary framework, however, within which Edna eventually deals with the questions of individual and social identity, is the erotic and sexual one. Because her upbringing and adult life have not equipped her for psychological maturity, Edna resembles, as Showalter mentions in passing (1988: 48–49; 1991: 77), an adolescent whose search for self takes the form of an intense—and, inevitably, self-centered—interest in her own awakening sexuality. Edna does, though, look for a holistic connection with a man. However, none of her love relationships satisfies the needs of *both* body *and* soul. Her husband mainly signifies for her a safe haven, a harbor of financial security and a guarantee of respected social status—thereby constituting what she wishes to become independent of during her search of self. At an early stage of her awakening, she momentarily believes that she has found a soul mate in Robert Lebrun; she is soon disillusioned, however, and the relationship is never consummated sexually. With Alcée Arobin she discovers her passionate sexual self, but no significant mental connection is ever established.

Chopin's eloquent narration portrays the sea as the only one of all of Edna's seducers whose call contains the promise of a fulfilling response to the longings of both body and soul. The narration underscores this holistic call already at an early stage of the novel by

evoking the voice of the sea, which addresses the soul, and the touch of the sea, which caresses the body: "The voice of the sea is seductive [...]. The voice of the sea speaks to the soul. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft, close embrace" (*A* VI: 32). Part of this passage is repeated in the tragic final scene (*A* XXXIX: 136).

This literary eloquence of Chopin has led some critics to interpret Edna's suicide as a numb drifter's passive yielding to the seduction of the sensuous sea. The question of whether Chopin depicts Edna's suicide as a premeditated and deliberate act or as a passive surrender is vital for any study concerned with the nature and degree of Chopin's feminism in *The Awakening*. Moreover, any critic's views of the two issues—the deliberateness of Edna's suicide and the degree of Chopin's feminism—are interrelated.[14] It is no coincidence that Nancy Walker, who finds little if any feminism in *The Awakening*, also argues that Edna more or less "drifts" into her death (1979: 69; for similar interpretations, see e.g. Martin 1988a: 23; Wolkenfeld 246). While interpreting Edna's death as her "final immersion into sensuality—the sea" (1979: 69), Walker stresses that Edna "resembles a sleepwalker much of the time, not aware on an intellectual level of what she is doing" (1979: 68). Walker's expression "much of the time" refers not only to the final scene but also to the events of the entire novel. For Walker, Edna's awakening is purely sexual (1979: 68)—a process that leads, by its overwhelming power and novelty, to what she interprets as Edna's ever-accumulating and essentially childlike "lack of command over her own feelings and actions" (1979: 69). In Walker's interpretation, Edna psychologically remains a child (1979: 69). Above, I have given the heroine credit for at least reaching adolescence, as it were. More importantly, I have also sought to stress, through the concept of diagnosis, that Chopin's covert explanation of *why* Edna fails to live out mature adult subjectivity points to Southern society's ways of organizing gender roles.

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[14] For summaries of critics' views of Edna's suicide, see Wolkenfeld 241–243; Martin 1988a: 13–14.

It is true, as Walker implies, that Edna's final act is permeated by ambiguity. This ambiguity does not, however, ultimately arise from what Walker and several other critics have interpreted as Edna's lack of will and decision, but from the fundamental contradiction that always characterizes suicide: through her deliberate choice Edna, as Paula A. Treichler puts it, makes "a decision no longer to decide" (328). Chopin's skillfully structured imagery patterns and their fusion at the novel's end corroborate this argument. Since these patterns have already been analyzed by Treichler and others, I only mention one aspect of Chopin's juxtaposition of sleep and wakefulness: the novel's sad finale begins when the narrator reveals that Edna stays awake all night after Robert's final abandonment of her (*A* XXXVIII: 134). In the novel's intricate web of imagery related to sleep and wakefulness, this turn in the plot is a powerful signal indicating Edna's entrance and withdrawal into a state of deliberate reflection, which will lead to a final and irreversible end. Indeed, the concluding chapter's sentence which Walker uses to support her argument of Edna's almost involuntary drifting into death ("She [Edna] was not thinking of these things when she walked down to the beach," *A* XXXIX: 136) is preceded by the narrator's crucially important comment, ignored by Walker, according to which Edna "had done all the thinking which was necessary after Robert went away, when she lay awake upon the sofa till morning" (*A* XXXIX: 136). After returning to the site of her awakening, Grand Isle, Edna carries out her premeditated plan in a dream-like condition, in which difficult, thoroughly deliberated decisions are often executed in life. The motifs of wakefulness and dream therefore *merge* in the final scene.[15]

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[15] While defending her argument that Edna "drifts" into the fatal embrace of the sea after reaching the water's edge, Walker also refers to Edna's instructions to the minor characters Victor and Mariequita about dinner (1979: 69; *A* XXXIX: 135). This detail in the plot, however, rather underscores Edna's need to ensure that no one will surprise her on the beach and prevent her from executing her final decision. Had her behavior deviated from normal routines, she would have risked raising suspicions and ruining her plan. Besides, Edna advises Victor and Mariequita that they should not "get anything extra," thereby discreetly attempting to save them from what she knows to be futile work.

Edna's undressing on the beach also underscores the premeditated nature of her suicide. By literally throwing off the "garment with which to appear before the world" (*A* XIX: 77; see also *A* XXXIX: 136, where the word "garment" is repeated) Edna breaks an ultimate taboo, the taboo of public nakedness. She thereby commits what is, in spite of the lack of eye-witnesses, an act of extreme unconventionality in her sociocultural context. Through this scene Chopin indicates that Edna has reached, and mentally gone beyond, the point of no return; she has already withdrawn into her own world where rules neither matter nor apply. The undressing is followed by the logical consequence of what the reader has already witnessed: Edna opts for the ultimate solitude, death.

What Edna "drifted" into was not her final fate but the vocation of marriage and motherhood: "Her marriage to Léonce Pontellier was purely an accident, in this respect resembling many other marriages which masquerade as the decrees of Fate" (*A* VII: 36). Just like Chopin's short story "A Vocation and a Voice" (1896),[16] *The Awakening* is also about a vocation and a voice, and a

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[16] See Chopin 1896c. This piece, which was first published in 1902, recounts the story of the sexual awakening of a young boy on the verge of manhood, a penniless orphan of Irish origin from "The Patch" (the name is suggestive of St. Louis's north-side Irish ghetto Kerry Patch; see Toth 1990a: 265). One day, while wandering in a large park, the boy accidentally encounters a Romany couple, Suzima and Gutro. He joins them, adopting their traveling lifestyle. Suzima and the boy develop a bond of mutual affection and sexual attraction. However, soon after the boy's initiation into the world of sexual pleasure by the older and more experienced Suzima, Gutro finds about the romance. The boy leaves the couple and joins a Christian brotherhood. He becomes Brother Ludovic, sublimating his repressed passion into a project of building a stone wall around the brotherhood's abode (pointedly called the "Refuge"). One night, however, Suzima comes back, singing a song that Brother Ludovic recognizes immediately. He abandons his religious vocation, leaves behind everything that he has built (literally and metaphorically) during his stay at the Refuge, and simply follows the voice of the woman. While the story contains obvious thematic parallels with *The Awakening*, the considerably less complicated or anxious atmosphere of "A Vocation and a Voice" is even more significant and striking than the similarities between the two texts are. The story's ending is happy, and Brother Ludovic makes his decision to follow Suzima in a split second, without any anguished soul-searching. Chopin needed an entire novel, or novella, for the story of Edna Pontellier's awakening, but only approximately 36 pages (depending on the edition) for "A Vocation and a Voice." These observations suggest that for Chopin the issue of female sexuality brought with it additional complexities that did not lend themselves to easy resolutions.

vocation and a choice. In her awakened condition Edna refuses to perform the one role for which she has been educated, and to accept its exclusive mode as the only vocation available for her. Edna literally finds her own voice during her awakening: when she learns to swim, she utters a shout of joy, momentarily abandoning her typical reserve (see also Treichler 313–314). At the novel's end, however, she chooses to silence herself by surrendering to the same sea which once prompted, through what seemed to be a promise of a new freedom, her cheerful shout. Upon fulfilling her desire to "swim far out, where no woman had swum before," Edna, paradoxically, has to give up her voice and her entire existence. Chopin mentions, in an 1894 essay, the "cry of the dying century" (1894c: 691); in *The Awakening*, Edna's shout of joy—whose content and ramifications only gradually dawn on the protagonist and remain unaccepted by her community—turns into a silenced cry of the dying century and of a passing way of life.

Conclusion

According to her own (somewhat contradictory) statements, Chopin wanted to depict universal themes, on the one hand, and focus on the individual and particular rather than the societal, on the other. She considered the timeless aspects of humanity to be manifested in such "human impulses" as love and erotic passion (Chopin 1894a: 693). Her oft-quoted comment on Ibsen[17] reveals her position that literature should not be harnessed to serve "mutable" social ends; tangled in webs of transitory details, fiction promoting social causes endangered, in her view, its long-term survival. *The Awakening*, however, illuminates the very fact that the depiction of the individual and particular—understood here, in Chopin's sense, as manifestation of the universal—in isolation from the societal is difficult or impossible. Fiction, if it is to portray the "universal" via

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[17] "[...] Ibsen will not be true in some remote to-morrow, however forcible and representative he may be for the hour, because he takes for his themes social problems which by their very nature are mutable" (Chopin 1894a: 693).

the representation of the specific, usually depicts, at least to some extent, interpersonal relations—and the portrayal of such relations tends to be suggestive of the author's consciously or subconsciously acquired social views. While "navigat[ing] between specificity of detail and universality of theme" (Fox-Genovese 1988: 39), Chopin seems to have been less aware of this interconnectedness of the universal, individual and societal than her twenty-first-century readers (who benefit from the twentieth century's rapid developments in social sciences and psychology) usually are. While *The Awakening* by no means represents socially "preachy" fiction, which Chopin abhorred, the societal permeates the text more powerfully than she herself probably realized. Chopin may, indeed, have wanted to "treat sexuality independent of gender relations," as Fox-Genovese suggests, but she failed, so to speak, in this rather impossible task. The "woman question" does inform *The Awakening*—literally imbuing the novel as an open question, however, rather than a fixed social agenda.

Written in a time period already witnessing the demise of the traditional Southern (Creole) ways but still predating women's liberation, *The Awakening* portrays an intermediary phase between an old way of life which had already begun to crumble and a new one which was yet to emerge. This transitional state, marked by unresolved tensions, characterizes the protagonist, whose awakening and final fate Chopin depicts through language and imagery pregnant with ambiguity (Treichler; Giorcelli). While *The Awakening* refrains from promoting any clearly defined social "movement," it insightfully portrays the problem of white, upper-(middle-)class female frustration, which the twentieth century addressed by drastically increasing the number of roles available to women. Although Chopin was not a prophet capable of predicting what the future might bring with it, she was one of the first women of her context and era to give literary expression to questions later addressed by the women's movement(s) and social changes of the twentieth century.

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